THE Nation

VOLUME 144 NEW YORK • SATURDAY • JANUARY 9, 1937 NUMBER 2

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The Shape of Things

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AS WE GO TO PRESS THE PRESIDENT IS ABOUT to deliver his annual message to Congress. We shall comment on it editorially next week. Meanwhile we submit to the attention of Congress a tentative legislative program of our own. It represents, obviously, only the bare bones of a policy. In the weeks that follow, *The Nation* will deal with each issue at greater length in editorials and articles, and will seek thus to clothe the skeleton in flesh and blood.

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WHATEVER HOPE HAD EXISTED FOR A SPEEDY termination of the European crisis disappeared over the week-end when it became apparent that not only Germany but Italy was sending a large number of new "volunteers" to the support of General Franco's rebels. The German action was not unexpected, especially after the Reich's refusal to accept the release of the freighter Palos as final settlement of that controversy. But the renewal of Italian assistance to the rebels came as a bitter surprise following the Anglo-Italian pact. Britain obtained a definite pledge that "so far as Italy is concerned the present territories of Spain shall remain intact." It also received full assurance that Mussolini would not seek to undermine its present position in the Mediterranean. But it apparently did not receive any guaranties regarding Italian intervention in the Spanish conflict. This raises a suspicion that Britain may have agreed to an Italian-aided rebel victory in Spain on the condition that foreign troops be withdrawn at the conclusion of hostilities. In support of this possibility, it is known that the British Foreign Office has consistently favored a rebel victory and has only been concerned in recent weeks lest Spain be permanently occupied by German or Italian troops. On the other hand, the developments of the past few weeks make it increasingly evident that even if General Franco wins he cannot hold power without permanent occupation by foreign troops. And whatever Britain may do, France cannot afford to see an insurgent victory. Such stubborn facts may yet restore Britain to sanity.

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MEANWHILE, IN SPAIN, THE INFLUX OF German and Italian troops seems not to have stemmed the tide which has been running strongly in favor of the loyalists in recent weeks. The new year found the government troops definitely on the offensive in every

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sector except possibly Andalusia—where a strong rebel attack has just been repulsed. The failure of the well-trained German troops to make a better showing against the workers' militia has been attributed to the "haphazard conditions" of the Spanish war in contrast to the mechanically perfect conditions under which they were trained. Considerable friction also appears to have developed between the Germans and their Spanish allies, who cling to the outmoded idea that Spain belongs to the Spaniards. At the same time reports from Catalonia indicate much closer harmony between the Anarchists and Popular Front parties than has hitherto existed, despite official notice that Catalonia will never assent to domination by Madrid such as existed prior to July 19. It is not unlikely that the improvement in organization and discipline in the government militia may have more effect on the final outcome than two divisions of German troops.

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TWO MORE UNANIMOUS DECISIONS BY THE Supreme Court make it appear that the judges are trying very hard to present a united front to a hostile public opinion. One, upholding the constitutionality of the Ashurst-Summers Act implementing the state laws (already enacted by thirty states) against prison-made goods, will be good news to the labor movement, which has fought the competition of convict labor. The other, overruling the conviction of Dirk de Jonge under the Oregon criminal-syndicalism law, is even better news for the civil-liberties movement. De Jonge's case, since the only accusation against him was that he spoke at a Communist meeting called to protest against police activities in a seamen's strike, was one that struck a blow at the whole organizing movement in labor. Both decisions are clearly sound and enlightened, although we wish that Chief Justice Hughes in the De Jonge case had directly ruled the state criminal-syndicalism law unconstitutional. Meanwhile Senator Robinson's statement on the need for a wages-and-hours amendment looks perilously like an attempt to smooth his path against labor opposition to his possible appointment to a Supreme Court vacancy.

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THE PARDON OF CHANG HSUEH-LIANG AFTER a nominal sentence of ten years' imprisonment for having kidnapped the country's dictator is consistent with the suspicion that an anti-Japanese deal was arranged in connection with the release of Chiang Kai-shek. Further evidence of the success of Chang's coup may be seen in the apparent abandonment of Nanking's recently announced anti-Communist campaign, and in the fact that the troops of the rebel Chang and Yang Fu-chen have been allowed to retain their positions in contact with the red army. While it does not seem probable that T. V. Soong, Chiang's anti-Japanese brother-in-law, will immediately assume the premiership, a general Cabinet shake-up is anticipated that will give a much larger representation to left-wing elements and may be the forerunner of a genuine Popular Front government for China.

AT LEAST ONE FUGITIVE INDUSTRY HAS BEEN stopped in its flight to the promised land of low wages and other "favorable conditions" in those small towns where there is a thriving chamber of commerce but no trade unions. Supreme Court Justice Philip J. McCook last week decreed that two affiliated dress companies must live up to an agreement with the garment unions in New York City not to move their shop or factory "from its present location to any place beyond which the public-carrier fare is more than five cents." In October the two dress firms locked out their workers and moved their machinery to Archbald, Pennsylvania. They have been ordered to move it back and to reimburse the 200 locked-out employees. This is a notable and entirely sensible decision. While it will have no legal bearing on those similar situations in which no such agreement exists, its psychological effect is salutary. There has been much talk of the ingratitude of labor in "forcing" employers to decamp from New York City because of alleged prohibitive labor costs. "With the end of NRA," said Justice McCook, "appeared a new need for such contracts as the one in suit. Without a remedy as wide as that need, unscrupulous employers of labor will be tempted to play one community off against another, unlawfully depriving New York City of her business and her inhabitants of their livelihood." At the risk of being branded ingrates, the labor unions no doubt will continue the attempt to raise the standard of living of their members and to fight the small-town sweatshop.

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TWENTY-SEVEN PEOPLE WERE KILLED LAST month in airplane crashes. We do not intend to follow up this statement with an angry attack on the airlines, for in spite of these fatalities they have passed the best year in their history as far as safety is concerned. But December's tragic total of air deaths does call attention to grave problems in aviation which should be and can be rectified. To blind flying under dangerous weather conditions most of last year's accidents have been due, and until technical improvements make radio beams infallible, blind flying should be prohibited. More important is the necessity of transferring the regulation of commercial aviation from the Bureau of Air Commerce to the Interstate Commerce Commission. Remembering Secretary Roper's secretive policy in connection with the investigations into air and sea safety last spring, we may expect nothing of any value to emerge from the bureau's coming secret investigation of the December crashes. Nor, in view of the bureau's notorious incompetence and negligence, do we believe that its requested $10,000,000 appropriation for improving safety devices will help matters much. As was recommended by Joseph B. Eastman, former federal Coordinator of Transportation, the I. C. C., which already regulates bus lines and railroads, is the logical body to put in charge of commercial aviation. A bill to give the I. C. C. the necessary powers was introduced in the House of Representatives last session. Its passage should be one of the first acts of the new Congress.

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LAWRENCE WESTBROOK ON ANOTHER PAGE of this issue presents a design for dealing with the evils of the agricultural system as it crumbles toward final extinction in the South. With his major point we agree. The logical solution would be to set up a separate administration to take over the functions of rural resettlement, and as Mr. Westbrook suggests, to draw upon the specialized knowledge and services that have been developed in a number of federal agencies. But this solution, simple on paper, bristles with difficulties in practice. To tackle simultaneously a knotty social-economic problem and a problem of interdepartmental, federal-state coordination and still to keep the red tape from throttling both efforts is a task of staggering proportions. With this single warning we indorse Mr. Westbrook's plan in its larger aspects. We support particularly his proposal that representatives of the tenant farmers' union be drawn into all discussions of legislation; we would go farther and urge that union men be included in any administrative agencies that may be set up. And we also urge that the government give legal protection to the legitimate activities of the farm organizations in the South. In the end the success of any plan of reform will depend on the ability of the croppers and laborers to organize for improving their own conditions and voicing their own grievances.

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THE OLD GAG OF STEALING A MAN'S PANTS in order to prevent him from going out and doing whatever it is you don't want him to do has been adapted to new purposes in England. Parliament has passed the Public Order Bill, which prohibits the wearing of political uniforms and the maintaining, organizing, or training of private armies. Spurred by the Blackshirt parade which caused the East End riots last October, the act was drafted for the express purpose of curbing Sir Oswald Mosley's fascist organization and as such is all to the good. Under a similar act Scandinavian fascist groups, deprived of the glamor of uniforms and with their parades rendered innocuous, quietly melted away. At this moment Sir Oswald doubtless feels as frustrated and furious as the man without his pants. Nevertheless, the act cannot be regarded with unmixed rejoicing. The original draft contained many clauses which, in allowing the police to suppress demonstrations and parades at their own discretion without having to answer for their action in court and in other ways, constituted serious violations of civil liberties. Some of these were amended in committee, and all may since have been eliminated. But if the act stands as it was, it is an example of how democracy may trip itself up in trying to avoid fascism.

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THE PLAN MOOTED IN WASHINGTON TO centralize the government press handouts strikes us as dangerous. For one thing it will shut hardworking newspapermen out of news. More important, it is a step toward the totalitarian state. A democracy can never afford to build a Chinese wall around public opinion.

Fourteen Points for Congress

MEMBERS OF CONGRESS: The editors of *The Nation* take the liberty of addressing this message to you. This is the first session in eight years not completely dominated by the shadow of the depression, and therefore one in which you can build a program of progressive legislation in more permanent terms. You will be told on all sides to be hard-headed and practical, not to go chasing after Utopias. We agree. But our social system is confronted today by certain hard facts which make their own demands and set their own pace for solution.

We shall waste no time in rhetoric. In the modern state the dispatches to a legislative assembly should be as brief and clipped as communiqués from a battlefield. We are setting down therefore a fourteen-point program, which represents not an ideal social system but the next steps that must be taken in social advance for America.

1. *Relief and Unemployment.* There must be no curtailing of work relief except as the unemployable are put on direct relief and the unemployed but employable are absorbed in industry. Until the end of the fiscal year the estimate of $877,500,000 made by the relief survey of the Conference of Mayors must be accepted as a minimum. A permanent relief and employment policy must be accompanied by a census of unemployment and the setting up of an adequate system of government employment exchanges.

2. *Social Security.* The present Social Security Act needs revision as follows: (a) Establish immediately federal health insurance; (b) provide for the inclusion of agricultural workers, domestic servants, and other exempt employees under the unemployment and old-age provisions; (c) eliminate employee contributions from both the unemployment and old-age provisions, and make up the difference with federal funds drawn from progressive taxation; (d) substitute a state-subsidy plan for the present cumbersome tax-offset plan for unemployment insurance; (e) eliminate the huge reserves contemplated for the old-age annuity plan, future deficits to be made up by taxation; (f) provide for an increase in the benefits under both plans, and advance the effective date for the old-age annuity plan to January 1, 1938.

3. *Housing.* A long-term program of low-cost housing construction, to be financed by federal subsidies to municipalities, trade unions, and public-housing groups, and to be carried on under the final control of a Federal Housing Corporation, but to be immediately subject to decentralized supervision. The construction is to be done under union wages and working conditions, with tenant and labor representation on the supervising groups to insure that rents will remain low.

4. *Labor Standards and Labor Relations.* To carry out President Roosevelt's expressed determination that "something must be done" to end child labor, starvation wages,

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and long hours in industry, we recommend: (a) a federal licensing measure, on the lines of the O'Mahoney proposal, whereby firms whose products enter into interstate commerce will be licensed by the federal government and must comply with child-labor provisions, minimum-wage rates, and maximum-hour and collective-bargaining provisions; (b) a plan of control in particular industries, as coal and textiles, unless it injures the consumer interest; (c) a constitutional amendment.

5. *Trade Practices.* While the existing anti-trust laws are not adequate and have never really been enforced, the present pressure to suspend or repeal them is dangerous. Pending more adequate legislation, it is imperative that a strong food-and-drug act be passed to protect the consumer, and that methods be studied for protecting the low-income consumer, both as to price and quality, in such basic necessities as milk and coal.

6. *Public Utilities.* The Wheeler committee's evidence of recklessness in the financial control of railroads should be gravely weighed, and the problem raised whether government control of railroads can be effective short of nationalization. Similar studies should also be made for the public utilities in gas and electric power. The control of holding companies in public utilities should be protected from judicial assault. We favor taking air-transport regulation from the Commerce Department and placing it with the Interstate Commerce Commission.

7. *Power.* Ratification of the St. Lawrence waterways treaty will reduce the cost of power in the region affected. In the TVA controversy, principles must be placed above personalities, and every effort made to preserve the government's most promising experiment in making increased power available at low rates.

8. *Security Control.* The powers of the Securities and Exchange Commission in ordering the segregation of brokers and dealers, and in developing control of the over-the-counter operations should be supplemented by (a) legislation empowering the commission to regulate the activities of protective committees and other groups in reorganizations; (b) regulation of investment trusts.

9. *Budget, Taxation, Monetary and Credit Policy.* It is desirable to have a balanced budget, but no fetish should be made of it, and balance should not be achieved at the cost of necessary social services. The corporate-surplus tax should be retained. The need for increased revenue should be met by strengthening the income tax in the intermediate brackets. No great harm will be done if the President's power to fix the value of the dollar is allowed to lapse. The great danger now is from too rapid monetary and credit inflation, which should be discouraged as a concealed form of taxation resting on manual labor and the white-collar groups.

10. *Agriculture and Land Settlement.* While soil conservation and crop insurance are both desirable, amendments to the Soil Conservation Act are required to restore an adequate measure of federal control. The work of the Resettlement Administration must be continued in giving immediate aid to the landless in our derelict areas and to the impoverished landowners in drought-stricken and eroded areas. For a more permanent program we favor a government corporation as provided in the Bankhead bill, with adequate annual appropriations and power to finance the taking up of land by share-croppers and tenant farmers. But this should be only part of a larger program of agricultural education, public health, and cooperation.

11. *Personnel and Government Service.* In effecting a reorganization of government agencies, care should be taken that, in the interest of either economy or efficiency, essential social services are not sacrificed or placed in hostile hands. The formation, by a regrouping of existing agencies, of three new Cabinet departments—Public Welfare, Public Works, and National Defense—is desirable. Government employees not under the merit system should be placed under it.

12. *Civil Liberties.* We favor (a) additional grants for the La Follette civil-liberties investigation; (b) legislation to insure greater freedom on the radio, the treatment of controversial subjects from all sides (as in political campaigns), and the exemption of the radio stations from libel suits; (c) an adequate anti-lynching bill, on the Wagner-Costigan model, providing federal prosecution of lynchers where the states fail to act; (d) legislation providing for jury review of the decisions of the Post Office Department solicitor banning material from the mails on the grounds of obscenity and sedition; (e) legislation to give the Labor Department wider discretion in handling "hardship" deportation cases; (f) repeal of the Blanton "red rider," muzzling the freedom of teachers in the District of Columbia.

13. *Neutrality, Munitions, National Defense.* We favor, as a neutrality policy, an embargo on the sale of munitions and basic war materials or the extension of credits to belligerent nations. Such an embargo should be imposed at the outbreak of war, but the President is to be empowered to suspend the embargo in case the majority of the signatories of the Kellogg Pact find that a country has been attacked in violation of the pact. We favor also the Nye plan for the nationalization of the munitions industry, and legislation "freezing" war profits in other basic industries to a minimum rate. We favor a unified national-defense policy which shall be restricted to the defense of the continental territory of the United States, and we ask a special Congressional investigation to determine a reasonable budget for such a policy.

14. *Court and Constitution.* We do not believe that action looking to a constitutional amendment precludes Congressional action regulating the exercise of the judicial power. Otherwise steps toward an amendment could be used as a screen to postpone indefinitely action to curb the Supreme Court's power. We favor therefore (a) a clarifying amendment, stating that the commerce clause shall apply to industry and agriculture wherever the products cross state lines, and giving Congress thus clear regulatory power; (b) a wages-and-hours amendment for the states, if later decisions should prove it necessary; (c) legislation either giving Congress the power to override a Supreme Court veto by two-thirds' vote, or providing that the court shall not invalidate an act of Congress except by at least a two-thirds' vote.

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General Motors Meets the Enemy

THE ice age of craft unionism having come to an end, the forces of industrial unionism are spreading over the Great American Desert of unorganized mass-production labor with a speed that has outrun all expectations. The present crisis in automobiles, which had been more or less expected in the spring, had its beginning in an 85 per cent tie-up in flat-glass production; its end may be a stoppage in steel and coal. Such is the nature of industrial unionism. No wonder A. P. Sloan, Jr., and William S. Knudsen of General Motors want to divert this terrifying unity into as many separate ditches as the corporation has plants.

With sure instinct automobile employers have set out to discredit the unions with all the resources at their command. The first of these is publicity—and smoke bombs labeled "One Happy Family" and "Outside Agitators" have already been tossed into the public prints. Having fought collective bargaining tooth and nail they now self-righteously accuse the union of failing to bargain collectively before going on strike. Having for years cheated the workers out of a living wage or anything resembling security of employment, they now talk, more in sorrow than in anger, of the vast sums being lost in wages, of the thousands of "loyal" employees kept from jobs. Having agreed upon a uniform wage-and-hours policy in a directors' room in Detroit—or in Wall Street—they refer the union to plant managers, as if plant managers were anything more than glorified foremen.

Behind this smoke screen of publicity, the employers are preparing their real offensive—economic and, if necessary, physical attacks upon the workers and their unions. The united front of the automobile, steel, and coal operators is assured. Word comes from Toledo that officials of the struck glass plant there, under pressure from the automobile employers, have suddenly become reluctant even to discuss the new agreement proposed by the union. The coal operators meanwhile, in a flank attack designed to divert the energies of John L. Lewis, have served notice on the United Mine Workers that they intend to lengthen the work week in the next agreement. We may have no doubt that steel will also do its part.

We may have no doubt either that Mr. Knudsen's decrees holding up advertising and canceling orders for steel, rubber, and accessories are among the weapons agreed upon for ending the strike without benefit of collective bargaining. It is even possible that the industrialists are ready to sacrifice the rosy-cheeked child Recovery rather than allow the unions a victory. As for the cruder forms of coercion to be applied directly to the workers, there is the "legal" injunction. It has already been invoked—the stop-and-desist order issued in Flint makes it difficult to believe in the existence of an anti-injunction law—and it will lead all too logically, as it has already led in Cleveland, to tear gas, police clubs, and broken heads.

The industrialists know just how crucial this battle is. The United Automobile Workers and the Committee for Industrial Organization also know its significance. It remains for the rank-and-file citizen to realize its importance. Let him get the matter straight—before he reads another line in his local newspaper. We are witnessing the first great upsurge of labor's strength under the banner of industrial unionism. Its demands are just. Its leaders are able and sincere. If it wins this first major skirmish, the victory will send new confidence and fresh energy streaming into every union in the country. It will strengthen the hand of the democratic rank and file; it will speed the organization of the unorganized. In a word, it will hasten the establishment of a strong mass labor movement which is the best defense against reaction and the only solid or enduring basis for a political party whose "liberalism" is dictated by principle and not by pressure.

It is because the industrial monopoly knows its implications that the automobile, steel, and coal owners will fight this strike to the bitter end. Mr. Roosevelt and his Administration know its implications. The President must also know that the workers who helped elect him are watching his every move with a new-found political awareness. They are able to recognize strike-breaking in any form; moreover, they have learned from Roosevelt himself that Alfred P. Sloan, Jr., is an economic royalist—to be resisted in the name of American democracy.

Some time ago we wrote in these columns that "history may record that in 1936 the giant of American labor cast off the tight but puny bonds of craft unionism and started going places." On New Year's Day, 1937, the giant was shouldering his way into the open-shop paradise of Detroit.

Pro-Fascist Neutrality

A MAJOR sensation was created this past week by the "discovery" that the Neutrality Act had no bearing on the Spanish conflict. Although this fact was pointed out last August by the State Department itself, some of the sensational newspapers have sought to give the impression that the crafty Robert Cuse—alleged to be a Soviet agent because he once made sales to Russia—had ferreted out a "loophole" in the existing neutrality legislation and through it was planning to dispatch a lot of airplane parts to the Spanish government. The result has been a veritable clamor from the reactionary papers, supported we regret to say by Mr. Roosevelt himself, for a broadening of the act to include civil conflicts. Suggestions have also been made that all Americans who participate in the Spanish struggle be deprived of their citizenship, and that the law be strengthened to include raw materials and other potential war supplies.

To much in the argument of the neutrality advocates we can give unqualified support. We agree, of course, that America's commercial and financial relationships led it into the last war and are likely to lead it into the next one. We agree as to the necessity for adding raw materials and other war supplies to the list of articles to be em-

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bargoed in the event of war. We would give full support to Senator Vandenberg's contention that the rules of neutrality must be laid down in advance of a war because "the exercise of discretion after a war has started inevitably invites an unneutral interpretation by any belligerent which is curtailed or offended by the decision."

Unfortunately, neither the President nor Senator Vandenberg appears to have noted the pertinence to the Spanish situation of this last argument. Here is a war already in existence. Under international law American citizens are prohibited from aiding the military clique which has risen up against the duly elected government of Spain. In the past the United States has never challenged this law. On the contrary, we were insistent, at the time of our own Civil War, on the scrupulous observance of the rule; and have repeatedly hidden behind it when supporting puppet Latin American dictatorships of our own choosing. To take action now in denying supplies to the Spanish government in its hour of need would be a deliberately unfriendly act. It would be worse than merely to accord the rebels belligerent rights to which they are not entitled. With Hitler openly aiding the insurgents, a general embargo by the United States, like the European non-intervention agreement, would be denying the government the resources of which the rebels are actually availing themselves. An embargo against Spain and Germany would be as bad, since no munitions are normally shipped to the Reich. The United States would in effect be taking sides in the Spanish conflict, and taking the side of the Spanish militarists, Hitler, and Mussolini against the government chosen by the Spanish people. Nor could there be any pretext that Congress was merely enforcing a principle agreed upon in pre-war days. There was never any intention of applying the Neutrality Act to civil war. In acting in the midst of the battle Congress is responding to the passions of the moment. And we need not look very far to find what interests in America are anxious for a fascist victory in Spain.

Much the same indictment can be made of the movement to enact neutrality legislation which would be mandatory in its application. We have already moved past the point where neutrality can be considered in terms of a hypothetical next war. The next war is upon us, and it is almost certain that it will be a war of aggression precipitated by Hitler with or without the aid of Mussolini. Ranged against the fascist powers will be France, the Soviet Union, and almost as surely England. It happens that England and France are much more dependent on supplies from the United States than Germany. Any announcement by the United States that it will not under any circumstances furnish the belligerent countries with the sinews of war is an open invitation to Hitler to launch his attack. Supplies that are denied the democratic countries would be just as useful to Hitler as the same amount of supplies sealed and delivered to Nazi Germany. Neutrality regulations which could be lifted in case the League found a certain country to be the innocent victim of aggression would not be open to this objection. If this country is to depart from traditional neutrality, let it at least be sure that it is not actively supporting fascism.

Birth Control Today

THE birth-control movement has passed out of the first long phase of its development into a new and more respectable one. It is no longer primarily a struggle, a social and moral revolution productive of heroes and martyrs, police raids, recriminations, and hysterics. It has won through to what might be called a safe period—though the phrase must not be taken in its common or Roman Catholic sense. On the contrary, never did the cause of birth control show fewer signs of even temporary sterility. Its newly won security has given it an opportunity to do the work that it was founded to make possible. Actual education in birth-control methods, the control and standardization of contraceptive appliances, scientific experiment and the development of safer techniques—these are the functions it will concentrate on in the coming years.

The roots of this change are imbedded partly in the long struggle itself, culminating in the successful fight conducted by Morris L. Ernst to establish by court decision the legal right of a physician to prescribe contraceptive measures and to transmit or receive contraceptive materials. But the change stems also from the evil years through which the country has just passed. Out of the lower depths of the depression arose a demand from sources that could not be ignored—public-health authorities, social workers, relief officials—that simple, safe, cheap methods of birth control be made available especially for the benefit of those on relief and the unemployed generally, and to all whose economic security was threatened. In some cities contraceptive advice was actually provided by the authorities. Even the Catholic church, sensitive to the pressures of the times, promoted the "safe period" theory and, by so doing, not only yielded an important doctrinal point but encouraged some fruitful research into the actual uses and limitations of the sterile segment of the menstrual cycle.

A third reason for the emergence of the movement from its period of civil war and revolution is the steady work through thirteen years of the Birth Control Clinical Research Bureau—a record of persistent experimentation coupled with service to more than 56,000 patients. This work has gone on almost literally under fire. The material amassed will form an invaluable basis for the scientific and social work that remains to be done. For this, credit must go first to Margaret Sanger, whose valiant and stubborn fight made the whole development possible, and second to Dr. Hannah M. Stone, who has headed the bureau and directed its work. Now it is in a position to call and conduct such meetings as that just concluded in New York, the Conference on Contraceptive Research and Clinical Practice, at which reports were made by a group of some 200 leading biologists and physicians working in this field. Next week we plan to print an article by Dr. Stone analyzing the chief scientific achievements of the year. Meanwhile we note with satisfaction the emergence of the movement into the bright light of scientific acceptance and friendly publicity.

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WASHINGTON WEEKLY

BY PAUL W. WARD

Washington, January 4

JUST as Congress is about to make its opening bid for the center of the national stage, the Committee for Industrial Organization has preempted that spot, and as a result the major question in Washington suddenly has ceased to be: What legislation will the Congressional mills grind out in the next few months? Instead, it is: What will the government—and Roosevelt, in particular—do about the strike that under C. I. O. leadership is rapidly spreading paralysis throughout the automobile industry and threatening to bring the whole structure of industrial recovery tumbling down?

It is too early to formulate an answer to that question. At the moment Washington knows very little about the situation beyond the fact that this promises to be the toughest and most crucial labor dispute any President has had to face, and that if the struggle is not quickly terminated, its militancy may infect the Congress and drastically reshape the legislative program. We know that the shutting down of the automobile plants will cripple whole sectors of American industry supplying and transporting raw materials and semi-manufactured and finished parts to the motor makers. We know, too, that if the strike itself does not spread through those same sectors of industry, including the nation's steel mills, its eventual solution will form a pattern that quickly will be forced on labor relations in all those sectors.

We think we know, in addition, that the automobile magnates will fight to the last ditch against unionization, that they will bring to that fight a vicious resourcefulness fully equal to that which their feudal progenitors in steel have always displayed, and that, if their wiles fail them, they will not be above taking refuge in the Supreme Court's bosom and from that vantage point defying Roosevelt, Lewis, and the public through the people's representatives in Congress assembled. But we cannot be sure of this until we know whether Henry Ford will fight shoulder to shoulder with his rivals. It is barely possible that the two groups, distrusting each other, will angle for preferential position in the labor struggle and thus play into the C. I. O.'s hands. Reports have been received here from Detroit to the effect that it was Ford himself who forced the Kelsey-Hayes Wheel Company to capitulate to the union week before last.

Ford's position in the fight is only one of its vital uncertainties. It is already apparent that the strike has been beautifully timed even to the inauguration of Michigan's new Governor, Frank Murphy, who is counted on to see that the state police forces do not become shock troops for the manufacturers and that the judiciary conducts itself with a minimum of indecency. It also is apparent that the strategy chosen—the attack through key manufacturers of parts—makes for maximum economy in effort. But we do not know how far the barons of the A. F. of L. can or will go in desperate self-defense to sabotage the C. I. O. by lending aid to the manufacturers, just as we do not at this time know the answer to that much more vital question: How long can John L. Lewis and his chiefs of staff hold in line the green recruits to unionism who are their followers in this automobile strike? It must be granted that because of their semi-monopolistic position and financial resources, the motor magnates can withstand even a completely effective strike for many weeks.

We may expect that when, as, and if a stalemate is reached, Roosevelt will intervene with a compromise proposal that will be weighted in favor of whichever side seems at that moment to be the stronger. In 1934, faced with a strike threat in the same industry, he imposed upon labor a peace formula so heavily weighted in the manufacturers' favor that the International Harvester Company later adopted it in place of its old time-tested company-union plan, as the NLRB recently found in a decision that indirectly denounced Roosevelt's formula as a fraud upon the workers. But in 1934 the automobile strike was merely a threat and not an accomplished fact, and instead of Lewis the Bold, Roosevelt had Green the Pusillanimous to deal with. Roosevelt this time will have to find a better formula.

There are, of course, dozens at hand, or will be when the New Deal's lawyers finish digging them up for him, for contrary to popular impression the history of federal intervention in labor disputes is a long and rich one. The lawyers need search no farther than Edward Berman's "Labor Disputes and the President" (Columbia University Press, 1924), or they may turn to the record of the NLRB *vs.* Jones and Laughlin Steel Corporation (Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, No. 8088, 1936) for an exhaustive review of precedents in federal intervention. The NLRB, which prepared the review, prefaces it with this summary of three sentences, the final one of which has ominous significance in the present situation: "Governmental intervention of some kind has been the rule in major labor disputes for more than half a century. Some of it has been without precedent or legislative authorization, much of it without preliminary planning or research. It has been most effective in those cases in which the government acted prior to the outbreak of the strike to remove its causes."

Not the least valuable aspect of the NLRB's review is that it forces recognition that court injunctions in strikes are also a form of intervention. There is strong likelihood that courts in the motor-strike areas will so splatter the scene with restraining orders as to make it

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almost impossible for the Administration to extract a peace formula from the resulting muddle and bitterness. The federal government itself has sought ten—and obtained eight—anti-labor writs under the Sherman Act, and more than 500 injunctions have been issued by the federal courts in labor disputes.

Executive intervention has divided itself into three categories. In the first of these is indirect intervention, which includes the investigation of strike issues under the direction of the White House or some federal department, the writing of letters to either or both sides urging settlement, conferences with the employers and union leaders, personal mediation or conciliation by the President, and, finally, the making of definite proposals for settlement or legislation. A classic example is Wilson's handling of the situation in 1912, when negotiations between the railroads and the conductors and trainmen broke down and the unions voted to strike. President Wilson called the disputants together to propose arbitration, found the railroads unwilling to accept the machinery of the Erdman Act of 1898, arranged a conference of the disputants and Congressional leaders, and evolved and pressed to enactment the Newlands Act, which provided the requisite arbitration machinery. In 1916, when another railroad strike threatened, Wilson, after the dispute had narrowed down to the issue of a basic eight-hour day, personally appeared before Congress and obtained enactment of the Adamson Act, which established an eight-hour day for rail workers.

The second category of executive intervention is a midway step between friendly indirect intervention and coercion. It consists of the use of publicity such as the publication of the results of the President's mediation efforts and the findings of his investigators—all with the purpose of hastening settlement of the strike. The third category, which takes in the coercive forms of executive intervention, has several subdivisions. One of these is the securing of legislation granting to the strikers at least some of the working conditions which their employers had refused them and for which they had struck. A more common stratagem in the field of coercive intervention is the threat of a federal investigation of the industry or one of its key members, with particular reference to prices and profits; it is aimed at obtaining concessions from the employers to avoid the threatened probe. Another form of executive intervention is the obtaining of injunctions to avert or end strikes, a practice first resorted to in the Pullman strike of 1894, when Cleveland obligingly appointed as special United States Attorney a management man, who in turn obtained the necessary injunctions and some 5,000 federal marshals to enforce them. Executive resort to the injunction device was had again in the railway shopmen's strikes of 1919 and 1922 and in the bituminous coal strike of 1919.

The use of federal troops is another coercive form of executive intervention. Cleveland called them out in the Pullman strike in 1894, Roosevelt sent them into Arizona and Colorado in 1903-4, Wilson sent them to Colorado in 1914, to Gary in 1919, and in the same year to West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Wyoming, Utah, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Washington. Harding sent them to West Virginia in 1921. The wholesale use of federal marshals in lieu of troops has already been noted in the case of the Pullman strike.

Every President from Cleveland's time to date has been confronted with major labor disputes, and few of them have been satisfied with the weapons they had at hand. Even Coolidge complained of this when, in connection with the 1925 anthracite strike, he told Congress that "authority should be lodged with the President and the Departments of Commerce and Labor, giving them power to deal with an emergency. They should be able to appoint temporary boards with authority to call for witnesses and documents, conciliate differences, encourage arbitration, and, in case of threatened scarcity, exercise control over distribution."

Spain's "Red" Foreign Legion

BY LOUIS FISCHER

Alicante, December 7

THROUGHOUT the centuries men have left their homes to fight on foreign soil for liberty. Byron, Lafayette, Kosciusko, and, in more recent times, John Reed—the list is long and illustrious.

Spanish democracy has been attacked. It has issued no call for foreign friends, but Europe's anti-fascists have volunteered in thousands to serve in the army of the Spanish republic. Approximately 60 per cent are French and Belgians, factory workers for the most part. There are also Poles, Germans, Czechs, Swiss, Hungarians, Bulgarians, Italians, Serbs, several score white Russian émigrés who thus want to document a change of mind, a Mexican artillery officer, a New York Jew, an Egyptian, some Algerian Arabs, two Turkish officers; and recently Britishers have commenced to arrive. Enlistment of women is discouraged, yet they slip into groups and are content to lend a hand wherever it is needed, either in ministering to the wounded or in peeling potatoes.

Usually governments have set no difficulties in the path of these volunteers. Foreign offices may adopt any attitude toward the Spanish conflict, but free nations do not obstruct the expression of the individual citizen's idealism. Not a few of these soldiers of freedom, however, have had to steal across the frontiers of dictatorships and walk many miles, footsore and penniless, al-

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ways evading the eyes of the police, before they reached hospitable soil.

Linguistically the International Column of the Spanish loyalist army is a Babel. Yet no greater unanimity of sentiment ever animated a modern fighting force. General Franco is a symbol of feudal backwardness, the tool of the interests which have kept the Spanish millions in cruel poverty. Nevertheless, the volunteers, when they march to the Madrid trenches, think less of Franco and Spain than of Hitler and Mussolini, and of the little Hitlers and Mussolinis of Europe. The members of the international brigades in Spain are not newcomers in the battle with fascism. As Socialists, Communists, pacifists, radicals, and liberals they have contended against fascism at home. "We are merely transferring our activities," a prominent intellectual in the brigade said to me, "to the most threatened sector of the world anti-fascist front, for if this sector crumbles the other sectors will be less secure."

The German, Yugoslav, Hungarian, Italian, and Polish émigrés, deprived of the possibility of attacking their national regimes directly, do so in Spain. The French feel that they strike a blow for their own Front Populaire. August Wach, a dealer in electrical appliances, left Germany in 1933, opened a store in an Alsatian town, and prospered. In October he closed his shop and put up a sign: "Gone for an indefinite stay in Spain." Since then eight men in the same city have followed his example. A young German named Kroge, finding it trying to continue the underground struggle against Hitler in Bremen, went to Montevideo. He returned to Europe as soon as the Spanish civil war began and enlisted in the International Brigade. "To me," a French Socialist declared when I interviewed him behind his machine-gun on the Madrid front, "this is chiefly target practice for Colonel de la Rocque's aristocrats."

To facilitate instruction and command, the foreigners are divided into units according to national origin. Thus there exists a Franco-Belgian battalion, an Italian battalion, a Balkan company, and so on. But in the barracks the men mix to share their experiences, military and civil. I went out to Madrigeras, a village near Albacete, where the Italians were billeted. A sham battle was scheduled for the storming of a castle. In a conversation between Captain Galliani, late of New York, who led one of the attacking parties, and Lukac, a Hungarian author, now commander of the second brigade at the front, it developed that they had fought against each other in the World War, Galliani in the Italian army, Lukac in that of the Dual Monarchy. Ludwig Renn, the German writer, recently released from a Nazi prison, was with us. He chatted with Major Vidal, commander of the base at Albacete. They had faced each other across no man's land at the Somme. Men once poised to kill one another are now bound together by a live community of interest.

Not all the men are World War veterans. Many received their military training as conscripts in various European armies. Experience in sports for some and the self-discipline of others make up for their lack of soldiering. All of them have fought bravely in Spain. In a month they won a reputation which thrills the Spanish republican army and causes the enemy to pause—this though their number is surprisingly small.

The figures have been exaggerated out of ignorance but also in malice. The first International Brigade reached the front in the early days of November with a full complement of 1,900 men. The second brigade got to the front on November 14. Its strength then was 1,550. To date these are the only foreign units which have borne arms in the cause of Spanish democracy—3,450 soldiers. Yet they have appreciably influenced the military situation.

The Spaniards are brave and temperamental but not martial. The last time Spain engaged in war was against Napoleon, over a hundred years ago. Ninety per cent of the regular Spanish army remained with Franco and Mola when they raised the standard of revolt. Great masses immediately entered the ranks of the government militia. But they were green, untutored, unofficered, unaccustomed to the whistle of bullets or the sight of an advancing foe.

The republic's "Foreign Legion," seeking unselfish political gains rather than loot, was originally conceived as a shock corps. On November 6, however, the rebels stood at the gates of Madrid; the militia had retreated headlong before the onslaughts of the Moors, who were rescuing Christian Spain from the will of its workers, peasants, and intellectuals. The idea of the great smashing offensive was therefore abandoned, and the International Column was thrown into the breach to save Madrid. It saved Madrid. Not alone, of course. With their backs to the walls of the capital, the government troops, aided now by newly arrived airplanes and inspired by the contagious example of the foreigners, likewise fought better. Franco encountered unexpected resistance. Since then the two international brigades have created a legend. They never retreat. They are not afraid to die—and that is a soldier's highest asset. Given an objective, they take it. The Moors were intrenched in a building of University City. They had machine-guns and hand grenades. The Hungarians were ordered to storm the building. They had only rifles and bayonets. They stormed it and captured it. They suffered 200 casualties out of a total strength of 300. A heavy loss, but the victory electrified thousands of men.

On other occasions the experienced internationalists stood firm when whole brigades melted away before the well-directed fire of the Moors. The Spaniards then realized that more might be killed in flight than in resistance. Formerly, when the Moors came on the scene, fright had seized the militia. Now the militia began to see Moorish heels high in the air. Moroccan daggers were shown in Madrid, trophies of successful skirmishes with the once-dreaded North Africans.

Spanish units lying next to the foreigners started to display finer fighting qualities. This spread down the line. Brigades competed for positions at the front. Could they not be on the left flank of the International Column? Might they not occupy the second-line trenches behind Kleber's brigade? Meanwhile the foreigners remained in

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the thick of battle. They refused to leave the trenches until absolutely certain that their sectors would be held. They were lousy; they had not bathed for fifteen days. At night, wrapped in one woolen blanket apiece contributed by French trade unions, they slept on ground covered with hoar frost. But of their own free will they stayed.

I was present in a cold staff dining-room when the arrangements were made for the relief of the first International Brigade by Colonel Gallo's excellent Spanish brigade. Commander Hans and Chief of Staff Ludwig Renn discussed all the details of the change. The enemy must not know that a new force was lying opposite. How achieve this? The Moors sometimes fired at night. Loyal Spanish troops always replied. The foreigners never did. Their nerves permitted them to refrain until and if their antagonists advanced. Gallo undertook to give strict orders against useless waste of ammunition to keep up courage. Everything was settled.

That evening I sat by General Kleber's fireside. Colonel Gallo entered. He was taking over from Hans, he reported, and all was proceeding well. But could not the internationalists be held at a convenient distance behind his trenches to be on hand in case of trouble?

When I visited the second International Brigade, it was in the second-line trenches on the northern Madrid front. The Spaniards felt secure in the first line with the foreigners just in the rear.

The Spanish army units take pride in cooperating with the International Corps. Immediately after they went into action on the Madrid front, the foreigners bore the brunt of many a hot battle, and their losses in the first fortnight were enormous. The first brigade went forward with 1,900 men early in November and counted 1,000 effectives a month later. The second brigade had 750 killed and wounded in three weeks of fighting. Today the rate of casualties is much lower. But the two brigades had to be reinforced. In the beginning new foreign soldiers were sent up from the base. But this interfered to some extent with the formation of a third international brigade. Moreover, it was held desirable from all points of view—military, political, and moral—to mix Spaniards with foreigners. The authorities accordingly ruled that the international units were to be reconstituted so as to consist of three foreign and two Spanish battalions. Rivalry immediately arose among the Spaniards. They all wanted to join the International Column. In the end two battalions of brave and hardened Asturias miners were chosen for the first International Brigade. The selection for the second brigade has yet to be made.

Behind the lines, far away in the eastern provinces, approximately 3,200 more foreigners are being trained, organized, and equipped for the struggle. Reports of 60,000 foreigners in the service of the Spanish government are therefore fantastic. Spanish republicans regret that the figures of Ambassador Ribbentrop and the Berlin *Börsen Zeitung* are untrue, and they will take measures, undoubtedly, to augment the size of the International Column. For the moment, however, these 3,200 in the hinterland plus the 1,800 survivors of the first two brigades represent the entire strength of the International column in Spain. The government expects to add some 2,000 good Spanish soldiers to the 3,200 foreigners not yet engaged in the Madrid battle—a reserve for a future offensive. Meanwhile, contingents continue to arrive from various foreign lands.

The relations between the foreigners and the Spaniards, needless to say, are most cordial. The women of Albacete have volunteered to wash the laundry of the men of the column stationed in that town. The Spanish Ministry of Education has given the column a college building near the coast for use as a 400-bed hospital for its wounded. The same ministry donated a thousand bottles of cognac for the men in the cold trenches, and writing material, foreign books, radios, and gramophones for the men in barracks. Villages near Valencia supply the column with oranges, pomegranates, rice, lentils, onions, and other vegetables—free of charge. Martinez Barrio, president of the Cortes and civil governor of Albacete, is always ready to listen to the needs of the brigades and to assist in meeting them. Prime Minister Largo Caballero told me that when he received arms—they are still very scarce in republican Spain—his first thought would be of the International Column. The railway workers of Albacete built a huge armored car on their own initiative, fitted it with a machine-gun, and presented it to the third brigade at a public ceremony marked by wildly enthusiastic scenes.

I was sitting in the headquarters of one of the brigades at the front when a delegation from the shoemakers' union entered with a beautiful pair of boots and tremendous rolls of leather. They had instructions, they said, to make made-to-measure boots for the commander and anybody else designated. This, one of the delegates declared, was merely a token of their fraternal sentiments toward the foreigners.

I saw the second brigade go off to Madrid. Old Spanish men and women moved for an hour among the soldiers shaking hands individually with hundreds of them and saying "Salud" and "Victory." Meanwhile young boys would attract the notice of the foreigners by exclaiming "Eh, Franco," and then drawing a horizontal finger across their throats. As the train pulled out of the station, the soldiers stood at the windows with clenched firsts raised, the Spaniards stood at attention with clenched fists raised, and all sang the International in a dozen languages. Women wept. Between the Spanish united front and the European united front as represented by the brigades there exists a powerful bond of friendship and common purpose. If the Spanish revolution wins, the left movements of the world will of course feel the stimulating influence. But even the process of helping Spanish democracy must have an encouraging and inspiring effect on parties depressed by the recent apparently irresistible encroachments of fascism. The International Column is therefore regarded by its sponsors as at least as necessary and beneficial to the outside proletariat as it is to the Spanish republic.

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Farm Tenancy: A Program

BY LAWRENCE WESTBROOK

THIS is the age of the laboratory method, by which experiments are tested and principles are formulated before large-scale operations are launched. One of the most important large-scale operations for the social future of the United States will begin when legislation is passed to cope with the problem of farm tenancy. In this field the experimenting has already been done, and done well. The underlying causes of the farm-tenancy problem are known. The principles of a solution are also known, having been developed in experimental laboratories. But there is grave doubt whether these realistic conceptions will eventually prevail. There is danger that the new legislation will ignore the exploratory work already done and turn over the administration of the act to some agency or government department not equipped to carry on the manifold activities involved in it.

Laboratories for the study of the problem were operated first under the Rural Rehabilitation Division of the FERA and then under the Resettlement Administration. The specific experiments bearing most directly on it are the rural communities at Dyess (Arkansas), Pine Mountain Valley (Georgia), and Cherry Lake (Florida). These were originally established by the writer under the direction of Harry L. Hopkins as part of the general program of rural rehabilitation. When the Resettlement Administration took over the rural-rehabilitation activities of the FERA, these three communities were given complete autonomy, and they have since functioned as independent rural foundations devoting their resources to the development of patterns of living for the share-croppers and farm workers without capital, who would otherwise be indefinitely on relief. They have been testing and proving grounds for the principles to be applied to a large-scale program. In all of them the findings are the same: tenancy is not a cause but an effect, and the evils associated with tenancy are not to be eradicated except by dealing with causes.

Men fail in the South not because they do not own land but because they are not competent farmers. They are incompetent because they are not physically well—a fact which presents immediate problems of hygiene and medical care. They are incompetent because they are ignorant, because they do not know how to farm or how to dispose of farm products—a fact which presents immediate problems in education, training, and organization. They are incompetent for other reasons, which I shall enumerate presently. To try to solve the problem without providing the necessary physical health, knowledge, and organization would not only accomplish nothing but might make a solution impossible.

The new legislation must not be so framed as to apply only to those relatively few persons who are already fitted for profitable ownership, but must cope with the problem of training and upbuilding the vast majority for whom it is intended. It must do much more than provide facilities for the easy purchase of land by needy individuals on credit at low interest. Its aim, in short, must not be solely the abolition of tenancy. You cannot change an unsuccessful tenant into a successful farmer by a mere change of his title to the land he works. Farm tenancy is not so much undesirable in itself as an effect of undesirable conditions. Under some circumstances it can be regarded as a desirable system. In France, Denmark, Sweden, and in our laboratory communities in America it may benefit the tenant. Some form of tenancy in this country will certainly be needed for the vast number of land workers who cannot qualify for land ownership or who do not want it.

Although the fundamental principles of a solution have become clear, legislation will not be effective unless the administration of the act is vested in a body capable of establishing and maintaining these principles. Legislation should be drafted with the lessons of the laboratory in mind, and since it will deal with the future of a group of citizens, these citizens, in so far as they have any articulate organization, should be consulted. The Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, given only a small part in the preliminary consultation, cannot in reason or justice be continuously ignored. After all, the legislation is supposed to be in behalf of those whom this organization represents. At a recent meeting of the committee of forty formed to suggest a program, the one and only tenant representative, W. L. Blackstone, who really is a farm tenant and a member of the union, somewhat apologetically expressed disappointment that actual conditions among share-croppers did not receive more consideration. To the amazement of those who have contended that all the share-croppers and farm laborers want is a hand-out from government, he said, "You could give forty acres and a mule and supplies to a lot of farm tenants tomorrow, and they would not have any of it at the end of a year."

No single government agency can cure the evils of tenancy. There is required the concerted effort of the many agencies already in existence, with their well-trained personnels. In farm supervision, farm credit, rural sanitation, hygiene, diet, education, recreation, and work relief, these agencies have developed services which can be made available at no very great additional expense. They need only be coordinated and directed.

The most important reason, I should say, why share-croppers and farm laborers cannot at once become successful farmers is to be found in their lack of training

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in farm management. They have always had their work laid out for them, with someone to tell them what to do and when to do it. They have been one-crop specialists, almost as limited in their activities as industrial workers in a modern automobile factory. They know little or nothing of the gardening, poultry-raising, and dairying essential for self-sufficing farming. If they are to become independent farmers, they must receive expert supervision and guidance, which can best be supplied by the Department of Agriculture.

A second reason why share-croppers and destitute farm workers cannot operate successfully at once is their generally bad physical condition. In the South they have lived for generations in mosquito-infested and unsanitary surroundings, on an improper diet, and with totally inadequate medical care. A large proportion of them are afflicted with insidious, energy-sapping diseases. The prevalence of malaria, pellagra, hernia, bad teeth, and diseased tonsils is without question a major cause of the shiftlessness and indolence with which these people are so often reproached. At the clinic established by the government at the Dyess colony in Arkansas it was discovered that practically every family examined for admission to the colony had one or more of these afflictions. After a few months' treatment the Dyess settlers were so improved in appearance and morale that they did not seem to be the same people. Their capacity and desire for work were noticeably increased. Their children, when sent to nearby public schools and placed in classes with children from local non-colony families, led their classes. It would be hard to find more convincing evidence both of the fundamentally worth-while stock of these people and of the deterrent effects of poor health. The malaria mosquito can be eradicated as effectively and perhaps as cheaply as the tick which causes Texas fever among cattle. The government has spent millions in successfully fighting the cattle tick. An attack on the malaria mosquito would now be a good investment. The broad experience and trained personnel of the Public Health Service should be utilized in the application of remedial measures to all of these prevalent diseases.

A third requisite for successful farming, with or without tenancy, is adequate credit. Tenants and share-croppers, particularly in the South, can obtain credit for production and credit for consumption only at rates so high as to make successful farming impossible. By being forced to trade at commissaries and by similar subterfuges share-croppers are usually made to pay exorbitant interest rates. The Farm Credit Administration is fully equipped to meet this problem and should be utilized.

The small farmer must necessarily produce, purchase, and sell in small quantities. This is a fourth obstacle to his success. He is permanently at a disadvantage which can only be overcome by the introduction of cooperatively owned marketing and storage facilities. The Department of Agriculture and the Farm Credit Administration have both had long experience in the establishment and development of cooperative marketing organizations. This experience should be drawn upon.

Small farmers are not able to benefit from mechanized equipment. They could substantially increase production by the use of modern machinery, which they cannot afford to buy but which might be made available through cooperative ownership or be rented from state corporations. Farm-to-market roads constitute one of the most pressing needs of our rural economy. They can be obtained through the cooperation of the WPA in localities where rural development is undertaken. Schools, hospitals, and recreational facilities are also badly needed in many localities, and can be obtained through the WPA.

Inadequate and unsanitary housing is a major handicap. Living quarters available for farm workers in the South are far worse than in the worst slums of the cities. It is practically impossible to maintain good health, to say nothing of decent living standards and self-respect, in the ramshackle hovels used as homes by the share-croppers and farm laborers who make our cotton crop. A sound program of rural development must include extensive modernization and new building, using any feasible pre-fabrication techniques which have been developed and engaging the cooperation of the Rural Electrification Administration.

Speculation in land values due to changes in commodity price levels has been a spectacular cause of the loss of farms in the past, and will be again if adequate restrictions against mortgaging and resale are not incorporated in the new legislation. It is certain that a program of rural development must contain provisions for such restrictions.

Since the causes of the evils associated with farm tenancy are many and since there are many existing government agencies fitted to help eradicate these evils, the problem should not be handled by any agency of government acting alone. In the laboratory communities which have already been referred to, it has been found that the various existing agencies can function most effectively when they are under the direction of a separate coordinating and directing organization. Virtually all that is needed to get the entire problem in hand is a federal policy-making and refinancing body, with separate operating bodies in each state. These might well be in the form of self-liquidating, non-profit state corporations.

The federal agency might well be a federal corporation charged with complete and unified responsibility for all land acquisition and disposition and for the formulation of rural-development policies. Purchases of land could be made with long-term bonds of the corporation, bearing guaranteed interest. Disposition of land could be made to the branch of government best fitted to use the land. Areas suitable for reforestation would go to the Forest Service of the Department of Agriculture. Areas suitable for parks, grazing, game preserves, and the like would go to the Department of the Interior. Land which is really suitable for farming would be sold to the state corporations.

The state corporations would be the real operating units of the program. Suitable state corporations are already in existence and have already been adapted to this type of work. In 1934-35 they were set up in each state by Mr. Hopkins under the name of Rural Rehabilitation

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Corporations, and were, in fact, private, non-profit, self-liquidating bodies. Their stock would be held in continuous trust by the directors of the federal corporation in order to insure effective execution of the policies determined by the latter. Their function would be to direct and coordinate the specialized services of existing government agencies and to supplement these activities with new services only when so directed by the federal corporation. To insure complete and understanding cooperation the Board of Directors of the federal corporation could consist of the Secretary of Agriculture, the Surgeon General, the governor of the Farm Credit Administration, the administrator of the Works Progress Administration, and probably also the Secretary of Commerce. Many of the directors of the state corporations might well be the local administrative officers of these same federal departments.

If we conceive of this program as being designed to cure the evils commonly associated with farm tenancy, the policy to be followed by the directors of the federal corporation becomes clear. It should be to set up a system of tenancy designed to benefit the tenant. Under that system tenants fitted to succeed as owners should be enabled in due time to become owners. Others who might succeed better as tenants should be eligible to receive the same benefits as landowners but under continued supervision. The purpose should be to develop each group under conditions enabling its members to rise as far as they can. The state corporations should, in effect, take the place of existing landowners, but in addition they should provide those necessary facilities and opportunities which have been outlined here and which are, of course, beyond the capacity and the province of private enterprise.

Blum and the Communists

BY M. E. RAVAGE

Paris, December 11

AS IT has turned out, the abstention of the seventy-two Communists on December 5 from approving the foreign policy of the Front Populaire government did not, after all, produce a ministerial crisis in France. All the rumors and alarums to the contrary notwithstanding, I make bold to assert that Thorez and his followers would have voted with the majority and would have found a way of justifying their course to the masses afterward if they had not known in advance (a) that a sufficient number of deputies in the center and right center would more than make up the deficiency, and (b) that despite Blum's warnings the Cabinet would not resign. The Communist leaders have accustomed the rank and file these past two years to the almost limitless elasticity of their line. They have taught them to swallow without gagging the unity of action with their "brother" Socialists, whom till 1934 they attacked as the best reliance of the bourgeoisie, the united front with their Radical "friends," whom they had helped to drive out of office a few months earlier, and almost if not quite the "French front" of all anti-Germans, which is but another name for the anathematized national union. They have not been afraid to preach to them moderation in economics, patriotism in home politics, and a healthy militarism in foreign relations. They have had no difficulty in explaining their reversal on the war budget, on strikes, on the middle classes, on the conscientious objectors, and quite recently on devaluation; and they would have been at no loss to justify an about-face on Spain in the interest of world peace—as did the Socialists—or domestic solidarity, or revolutionary discipline, or what you will. But what would have taken tough explaining—at the present moment anyhow—and what they only too well knew would strain the workers'—let alone the middle classes'—good-will would have been their upsetting the Front Populaire government, their disruption of the Front Populaire itself, and the mighty chaos both in France and in the outside world which such a step would have provoked.

The rumors and alarums were as varied as they were fantastic. The solitary grain of truth in the heap was that the Cachin-Thorez team was after the Blum-Delbos scalp. Why? For a score of reasons, among which the Blum-Delbos Spanish policy held a conspicuous place and the essence of which can be summed up in the government's thesis that a general war may yet by wise diplomacy be averted and that therefore the time is still unripe for transforming the Franco-Soviet pact into an offensive and defensive military alliance. True it is, also, that the Communists are impatient to see the Front Populaire swell into something broad enough to neutralize the Socialists' predominance. But wanting a thing is not synonymous with getting it, or even with seriously going after it. Blum out, the question would be with whom to replace him. The last thing the Communists have in view, whatever the red-baiters may say, is to take the succession themselves, or even to take part in any conceivable combination that might do so. Thorez, to be sure, at a meeting at Vichy launched a trial balloon by declaring that "the life of the Front Populaire hung upon no particular ministry"; but the storm that that statement stirred up was so violent that the *Humanité* deemed it prudent to omit the sentence from its report of the speech, and the *Populaire* roundly served notice that the only leader having the confidence of the Socialist Party was Léon Blum. Moreover, both Chautemps and the Premier had warned their allies on the extreme left weeks ago—when the first signs of the new Communist tactics manifested themselves—that there was

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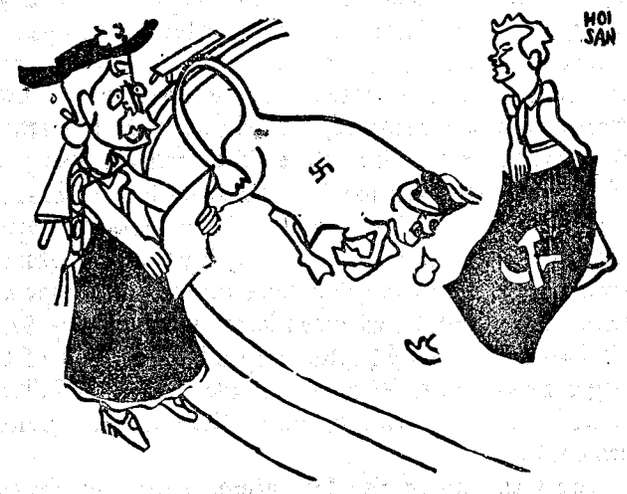
no "loose-part ministry" lying about, so that the disintegration of the present majority would be the signal for dissolution of parliament and new elections. No one knows better than Thorez and his friends that they have little to hope for from a free-for-all electoral battle at this time. And a few days before the Chamber debate on foreign policy Blum took care, at a meeting at which both Cachin and Thorez were present, to announce that he had not changed his mind: "No government, he said, is more difficult to defeat from the outside, and none is easier to disrupt from within. For let but one of the constituent parties withdraw and the Front Populaire will cease to exist."

The Communists thus knew what to expect. But even if a *ministère de rechange* was to succeed the Blum Cabinet, where was the nucleus round which a majority could be assembled and which would be acceptable at once to the Communists, to the workers who follow them, and to the country? Two or three months ago Daladier seemed a possible candidate. Quite aside from the extreme unlikelihood that the Minister of War, if he became Premier, would "lift the blockade" against the Spanish republic—which is ostensibly what has sent the Communists on the warpath against Blum—his stock has lately fallen to zero or below on a much graver issue. As a matter of fact, it is well known that with the exception of Pierre Cot all the Radical-Socialist ministers favored the so-called non-intervention pact, while the Socialists with Blum at their head subscribed to it with the greatest reluctance. What has definitely and hopelessly eliminated Daladier is that in a recent speech he alluded to the Soviet Union—without naming it—as "a barbarous Asiatic country."

It was the avalanche of "loose-part" ministries that ruined the Socialist-Radical cartels of 1924 and 1932. The Communists surely have not forgotten that. They know as well as anyone, too, that were the present bloc to crack up, the slide toward counter-revolution would become irresistible. They are much too astute to imagine that the process would this time terminate with the immediate successors of the Blum Cabinet, whoever they might be.



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Drawings from *Le Petit Bleu*, Paris

CHIANG KAI-BLUM VERSUS CHANG HSUEH-THOREZ
Playing the Game of Who Is More Chinese?

The resignation of Herriot over the war debts in December, 1932, was the prelude to the five-act tragi-comedy of which the climax was the hounding of Daladier out of office by the mob for nothing at all, and the sequel the advent of Doumergue, the heaven-sent would-be Brüning of France. The chief difference between the cartels and the Front Populaire is that the latter has laid up a store of hatred and bitterness among its enemies so hot and furious that, were it to be tripped up, it would take rather less than five acts to touch off the inevitable catastrophe. Goaded to madness by the succession of strikes and plant occupations, social legislation and press laws, nationalization and devaluation and tampering with business generally, the motley crew of the opposition would give a dukedom, now that the Senate and the right Radicals in the Chamber have let them down, if the Communists would start something. I do not think Thorez and Cachin are disposed to oblige them. I have reason to believe they are under no illusion about what political party and what social class would be the first to be crushed by the avalanche were they mad enough to loose it again, or about the direction which the change of policy toward republican Spain and Soviet Russia would take. And that is one of the many reasons why I do not hesitate to say that Duclos's somewhat truculent speech in the Chamber and his seventy-one colleagues' folded arms during the voting were meant to be nothing more than a broad reminder to Blum-Delbos that communism in France was a force to be reckoned with.

At the bottom of it all is, of course, the open secret of the strains and frictions within the Marxist family. But that is an old story—a very old story which unhappily has not improved with either age or cohabitation. The Communists, after quarreling with the Socialists over their gradualness, *embourgeoisement,* and cooperation with the middle classes, now reproach them with inflexibility, un-

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realism, "leftism," and pacifism. It was the Communists who, in the Front Populaire program committee last year, stood with the Radicals against the Socialists in opposition to the nationalization of monopolies. It was they, again, who with the Radicals would have nothing to do with the Socialist proposal to exact a pledge from all candidates standing for election on the Front Populaire ticket. And it was only after an incipient revolt among their followers and a menacing growth of "Trotskyism" among the Communist workers that Cachin and Thorez yielded to the pressure of the Socialists last September and abandoned the phrase—though not the agitation for—"the French front."

But what the Communists hold chiefly against Blum and his comrades is their pacifism. It is interesting to note in this connection that a violent quarrel between the Communists and the Intellectuals' Anti-Fascist Committee, a non-political group having members in all left parties, arose after the committee had issued a pamphlet entitled "War Is Not Inevitable." The Communists are persuaded—they are not the only ones—that war with Germany is bound to come, that therefore "conversations" with Hitler are a snare, that the everlasting concessions to the fascist powers' threats and blackmail can only weaken France and endanger the peace of the world, and that the only safety consists in meeting bluster with bluster and force with force. That, in few words, is the Communists' *casus belli* with the Blum-Delbos foreign policy as a whole and its application in Spain specifically. They maintain—rightly, in my opinion—that if France had stood on international law and kept up normal trade relations with the Spanish republic, not only would the insurrection have been repressed months ago but Germany and Italy would have backed down; and they point out, quite justly, that when the Soviet Union in October called the fascist bluff, nothing very grave resulted and the war did not pass the confines of the Spanish peninsula. This Communist position, it is well to note, is shared by a preponderant section of French left opinion—by the Trade Union Confederation, by the anti-fascist Women's Committee, by the League of the Rights of Man, and by a large wing of Blum's own party. But there is an important difference. Whereas the Communists openly and violently attack the government, the others support Blum on the theory that the government alone is in a position to judge of the international ramifications of the problem. The Communists are aware—as I am, on the best authority, in a position to affirm—that France is unofficially helping Spain nearly, perhaps quite, as much as is the U. S. S. R. Nevertheless, they go on yelling their slogans of "Blum à l'action" and "Airplanes for Spain."

The left Socialists and the others, moreover, though they view the government's inaction in Spain with the keenest apprehension, hold that the rapprochement with England more than compensates for its inconveniences and dangers. But it is precisely this cooperation with Britain that the Communists most mistrust; not that they fail to appreciate the value of an eventual reconstitution of the old Triple Entente—they would welcome an alliance with the very devil against Hitler—but that they have not the least confidence in the present British rulers or their aims and motives. They fear, not without reason, that the newly patched-up Franco-British understanding is less a solid alliance between equals for mutual defense than a paralyzing embrace designed to neutralize French independence (witness the non-intervention pact); that it is an *accord de passivité,* and that a too influential section of the London government is irrevocably wedded to the famous Occidental pact, with all the dangers which that scheme implies for the safety of France, the peace of the world, and the Soviet Union; that, in short,—and I am not prepared to say they are wrong—it is British chicanery that has prevented the Franco-Soviet pact from being followed to its logical conclusion.

The flurry of December 5 in the Palais Bourbon has blown over. Neither side has come out of the affair with added credit. To be sure, the announced storm has been averted; but I have a suspicion that the Front Populaire has been shaken to its roots. After mutual warnings and recriminations, Socialists and Communists sat down in their newly revamped Entente (ex-Coordination) Committee to assess the damage. They have declared the incident closed, and Vaillant-Couturier in *Humanitè* informs us that the "Front Populaire is in the best of health." Perhaps it is. But the rumpus has bared to the public view a family skeleton which the well-informed suspected to exist and which is likely to disturb the public life of France again and again.

Senator Norris's Legislature

BY ROSCOE FLEMING

Lincoln, Nebraska, December 29

SENATOR George William Norris, Nebraska's grand old man, will be present in the modernistic mahogany-paneled chamber of the state capitol on January 5 when the nation's first unicameral state legislature opens—and one of the major government reforms long advocated by Senator Norris is realized in his home state. Forty-three men who have already been elected on a non-partisan basis, will be sworn into office. They will take the place of 133 men—100 in the House and 33 in the Senate—who two years ago functioned as Democrats and Republicans in Nebraska's last bicameral legislature. Nebraska awaits the results of this departure with mingled hope and fear. The constitutional amendment sponsored by Senator Norris was fought bitterly by all except two of the larger newspapers. Virtually all the leading politicians of both parties opposed it, and hostility in these quarters has not lessened.

The members of the legislature, elected by district, were both nominated and elected without party designation—a provision for which Senator Norris stood firm despite fears that it would defeat the constitutional amendment. Thirty-two of the forty-three members have had

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previous legislative experience, some of them being veterans of many years. There are ten lawyers—a higher proportion than in the bicameral legislature. One member is former Congressman John H. Norton, of Polk, Nebraska, who was working for the inauguration of the unicameral legislature in Nebraska as early as 1913, and who never stopped working for it until its triumph in 1934. He was a member of the constitutional convention of 1920 in which a tie vote was cast on the amendment, the chairman voting against it.

Another member is young John Adams, a Negro from Omaha, who was a representative in the last two-house legislature. Adams then represented a comparatively small district with a majority of Negroes. When the unicameral district was created, it was much larger and more populous, and the Negro population was swamped by whites. Adams filed with little hope of winning. The Democratic machine in Omaha put up against him a man generally regarded as a professional politician, and Adams won.

The non-partisan feature has already had healthy effects. Two years ago the Democrats, with a majority of 18,000 in the state, had approximately a two-to-one majority in the Nebraska House and Senate. In 1936 their majority for Governor Cochran was 77,000 and for President Roosevelt 100,000. Yet the unicameral's forty-three members, elected at the same time, consist "in private life," as Nebraskans charmingly say, of twenty-two Democrats and twenty-one Republicans. This would indicate that the people voted for the man and not the label, as Senator Norris contended they would. Unless partisan feelings mount higher than they have so far, some persons do not expect the parties to organize and caucus within the legislature, even informally.

Efforts are now being made to devise a set of rules and a type of organization that will insure orderly consideration of bills, without the jams and slack periods characteristic of two-house legislatures. Constitutionally the amendment left the members pretty free. Aside from the one-house feature, the amendment's most important stipulations are election by single districts, with no mass election of large delegations from the cities; the non-partisan election; the provision that the unicameral may by law meet oftener than once every two years (without disturbing the governor's power to call special sessions, however); the removal of any time limit on introduction of bills (the old legislature could receive bills only during the first twenty days except by request of the governor); the provision that no bill can pass and become law in less than five days, and must be on file for final reading and passage for at least one day; and finally that any one member may demand and receive a record roll call on any matter. There is no constitutional limit on length of sessions. The veto power remains undisturbed, three-fifths being necessary to override the governor.

To the rules thus laid down in the constitution, members and others are working to add rules that will (1) enlarge the function of the committees and cause them to act with more thoroughness, and (2) make it well-nigh impossible for any but the most urgent matters to be acted upon out of their order in the legislative routine. Possibly the rules will provide that one member, or at most not more than three, may prevent consideration of any bill out of order.

Instead of the usual thirty or forty committees, there may be no more than nine; each will embrace a whole function of state government and all the legislation in this general field. Thus a finance committee will handle the state's fiscal affairs and all legislation relating to banks, insurance companies, building and loan companies, and the like.

It is possible that the legislature will take advantage of its power to meet oftener than biennially and will meet yearly, considering at one session only appropriation bills and the budget, and at the other general legislation. It may also decide to build up a legislative council or an expanded legislative reference bureau—Nebraska now has a small but efficient one—for continuous research that will provide it with a continuous flow of information upon suggested legislation and needed legislation. This would be the strongest single weapon against the ubiquitous corporate and pressure lobbies. The legislature may keep its calendar of business alive for the entire two years of its existence, as the United States Congress now does—something rare or altogether lacking in state legislatures.

Professor John P. Senning, professor of political science at the University of Nebraska and a strong advocate of the unicameral system, expects the legislature to move slowly at first. He believes it would have been better had the terms of members been set at four years instead of two. Senator Norris wanted a limit of thirty members but accepted a limitation between thirty and fifty. The legislature, in passing the enabling act, wanted fifty members but could not form, as the amendment provided, fifty districts approximately equal in population, compact and contiguous. In large industrial states, Professor Senning thinks, the upper limit of membership should be as high as sixty to insure adequate representation of diverse interests. He points out that where the election is not non-partisan as it is in Nebraska proportional representation should prevail in order to protect minorities.

The amendment did not raise salaries. Members will get $1,774 for two years' work, plus actual cost of transportation for one trip each session. They will get no extra compensation for special sessions. The lieutenant governor is the presiding officer. He has no vote except in case of a tie.

Professor Senning points to the fact that all cities of more than 25,000 in the United States have unicameral councils, and that eight out of nine Canadian provinces, one Australian commonwealth, and the new Philippine government have unicameral legislatures. Pennsylvania, Georgia, and Vermont once had what were called unicameral legislative bodies. They were abandoned, but this is not to be taken as a bad omen for the Nebraska experiment. Those early bodies had a companion body which could not pass bills but could wear down the law-making body by resubmitting legislation until it was accepted.

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

THE funeral of Arthur Brisbane was, according to the newspapers, a very remarkable occasion. Five thousand persons were said to have attended, in and out of the church, and the list of pallbearers was quite astounding. This may be in part explained by the fact that when you get a telegram asking you to be a pallbearer you are under very strong obligations to accept. I hope that accounts for the presence of Mayor LaGuardia, Governor Lehman, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Gerard Swope, Vincent Astor, and numerous others. I do not suppose that there has been such an outpouring for a journalist in many years. One might be tempted to conclude from it that the journalist so celebrated had been a great moral power in the community, that he had championed high ideals all his life, that he had always written exactly what he believed, that he had raised the standards of American journalism.

Unfortunately none of these things are true. He was a man with an extraordinary range of knowledge, with unquestioned writing ability. He was a natural-born journalist, and when he let himself go could do a remarkable piece of descriptive writing. His style was, however, deliberately cultivated to appeal to the simplest mind—he wrote down to the mass mind. He made the widest possible appeal by reducing things to their simplest form. It would be unfair to judge his column by what it has contained during recent years, when it has usually been a rewrite of late dispatches which appeared in the news columns near by, coupled with some superficial or banal comment. There has been nothing inspiring, nothing uplifting, and for many years no championing of the cause of the plain people, of whom he and his employer were the self-appointed protagonists in the early years of the Hearst experiment. He will be forgotten promptly, or remembered only as an easy writer whom one might read for months without the quickening of a pulse.

This was a hired man who bartered his beliefs and rejoiced in his shame because thereby he made great sums of money. For many years, perhaps even at his death, he was the highest-paid American journalist, and his love of money, as Westbrook Pegler has pointed out, was what kept him from being a great man. For that he sold his soul when he took service with Mr. Hearst; for that he abandoned his opportunity to be a great national leader. He piled up millions, being one of the shrewdest and most successful real-estate speculators in New York City, profiting greatly by what the single-taxers call the "unearned increment." He was a remarkably skilful money-maker, but in becoming that he threw away his opportunity to be a really great and noble journalist. For decade after decade he took orders from his employer. He even went so low at one time as to write page puffs of theatrical performances, for which Mr. Hearst received $1,000 the page. He was always ready to glorify Mr. Hearst's friend, Marion Davies, or to back Mr. Hearst's political ambitions, although he knew perfectly well that Mr. Hearst was not fit to hold public office. In other words, Mr. Brisbane was without principle. It is known that of late years the two men had drifted apart and that Mr. Brisbane's own political views, notably in the last campaign, were quite different than those of his employer. But Hearst's debt to Mr. Brisbane remains incalculable. That skilled pen built him up, made him out a statesman —when it could—and was even ready to help Hearst in his aspirations for the Presidency, so fortunately thwarted by the publication of some plain facts.

I have heard many newspapermen discuss the question which of the two men was the more censurable. I have always felt that Mr. Brisbane was because he came of good family, fine stock, and therefore knew better. Mr. Brisbane's father was one of that group of New England idealists and early socialists who tried at Brook Farm to live up to their principles. He died, not a rich man, but a highly esteemed one who rejoiced in the friendship of Emerson and Lowell and Thomas Wentworth Higginson and Theodore Parker—all that clan which played such a great part in the literary and intellectual development of New England, in the fifties especially. It was with that background that Arthur Brisbane entered journalism and abased his unquestioned talent. I suppose I am out of date and old-fashioned, but even at my age I cannot worship material success at the cost of the finest spiritual qualities and of intellectual integrity. I am well aware that the former course wins the more pallbearers and the longer obituaries. Did we not see similar outpourings at the funeral of Chauncey Depew, the man who did so much to corrupt the political life of New York State over many years, and at that of the elder J. P. Morgan? I have not forgotten that when the highest-minded, most ceaselessly patriotic of modern journalists, Edwin L. Godkin, died in England, there was not sufficient recollection of what he had done over many years in combating the evils of American political life, and especially of what he had accomplished in improving the civic life of New York City, to bring about the holding of a single memorial meeting in the city in which he had so long labored. In his incredibly omnivorous reading Mr. Brisbane must have memorized Shakespeare's lines: "The evil that men do lives after them, the good is oft interred with their bones." There was a cynicism which must have appealed to him, for he was a self-made cynic who suppressed his finest instincts solely for the sake of the power that comes with wealth.

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BROUN'S PAGE

Without Trumpets

SOME bitter things are being said about William Green. And many of the charges hurled at him are wholly without foundation. Possibly I am not the best person to defend him since he is the president of a federation to which I belong. Indeed, I am a double member through holding two union cards. Of late I have not been very active in Equity because I have been without theatrical offers for the past couple of seasons. Oh, and I forgot, I'm an honorary member of the sceneshifters' local in Washington, D. C.

But it is about time to get back to Mr. Green and speak my short piece in his defense. The preamble was merely to identify myself and explain my labor background. I wouldn't want to have anybody speak up and say, "You're for Green simply because you're a union man. That explains your enthusiasm for him."

Of course, I'm a union man, but I believe I would praise Bill Green in precisely the same way if I were not. William Green is wholly sincere and honest. He is devoted to the cause of labor. He has given a lifetime of service to it. The man has only two faults. He is a fool and he is a weakling. Aside from this William Green has everything a labor leader needs.

I hate to drag in the religious issue, but it is impossible to understand Mr. Green completely without revealing one incident in his Biblical background. William Green is a Baptist. There is nothing wrong with that. Some of the younger Baptists are among the most liberal leaders in America. Unfortunately, in a way, William Green is no longer young. He came into a branch of the church which was pretty dogmatic and fundamentalist. Baptism, of course, was by total immersion, and the local preacher was not only earnest but muscular. He was wont to thrust his converts deep below the surface of the creek. When William Green was taken into the fold, the preacher made one slight error. He pushed Bill under the surface and then forgot to bring him up again. Accordingly, labor in America has been led by a man who sees the world imperfectly and through muddy waters.

But in these days of sharpening strife, labor cannot afford to be led by any well-meaning person who is not quite bright. William Green doesn't retain. The movement for organization must be along broad lines, and the captains of the enterprise are now matching their wits with industrialists who have the edge in the matter of resources. To be sure the ultimate power lies with labor, but that power cannot be exercised without organization. There's the rub. The situation is not unlike that in which the butterscotch soldier found himself in "Davey and the Goblin." The butterscotch soldier couldn't run until he got hot, and he couldn't get hot until he ran. I believe the psychiatrists call this a vicious circle.

Labor must find leaders energetic enough to break through the ring. The policy of the A. F. of L. under its present commanders has been simply to stand its ground and form a hollow square. Moreover, it has been rather more hollow than square.

In contrast to the stagnation of the Green troops is the magnificent progress of the C. I. O. It seems to me that the strategy of John L. Lewis is proving its worth. If Mr. Lewis had gone to Tampa or thereabouts, it would have made magnificent copy for the newspapers but it would have been less than artful. John L. is beginning to extricate himself from a dangerous position. He knows as well as anybody, and in fact better than any other labor leader, the value of publicity. But he is also wise enough to appreciate the fact that there can be too much publicity. For a time John L. Lewis was making the front page every day. This did not imply friendliness on the part of the papers. They wanted to take John up on the high battlements merely in order to push him off so that he might conveniently break his neck.

Part of the plot was the commotion raised in many quarters that Lewis was consumed with a passion to be President. Now there is nothing improper or disgraceful in such an ambition. In school we were all told that we might make it if only we were good little boys and did what the teacher told us. But in the case of Lewis the whole intent was to convince workers that his efforts in organization were only moves for his own advancement.

Fortunately, John L. Lewis understands newspapers and their ways extremely well. With the possible exception of President Roosevelt, he is the most skilful man in Washington at handling a press conference. He realized that while a certain number of headlines were useful, the fight could not be won on paper. In the last few weeks he has gone into the silences and sawed wood.

Without much tumult great gains have been made in both steel and motors. I'm inclined to believe that victory may be won in the automobile plants earlier than in the steel mills. The strike of the flat-glass workers has already driven a wedge into the ranks of the motor barons. Lewis has the imagination to understand the tie-up which exists between steel and motors and glass. It is a war against an empire. From this point of view the craft theory is worse than absurd. It is tragic. It is like attacking Gibraltar with a bean shooter. It is an attempt to break a front-line fortress by sending out cops in squads of ten or twelve. There has been a great deal of discussion as to the real issue between the C. I. O. and the American Federation of Labor. William Green has said repeatedly that the industrial union is not the issue. He may be right, because as a matter of fact the issue is even more fundamental. It boils down to this—in fighting for its rights is labor going to use its head or have it broken?

HEYWOOD BROUN

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

ON BEING MODERN-MINDED

BY BERTRAND RUSSELL

OUR age is the most parochial since Homer. I speak not of any geographical parish: the inhabitants of Mudcombe-in-the-Meers are more aware than at any former time of what is being done and thought at Praha, at Gorki, or at Peiping. It is in the chronological sense that we are parochial: as the new names conceal the historic cities of Prague, Nijni-Novgorod, and Pekin, so new catchwords hide from us the thoughts and feelings of our ancestors, even when they differed little from our own. We imagine ourselves at the apex of intelligence, and cannot believe that the quaint clothes and cumbrous phrases of former times can have invested people and thoughts that are still worthy of our attention. If "Hamlet" is to be interesting to a really modern reader, it must first be translated into the language of Marx or of Freud, or, better still, into a jargon insistently compounded of both. I read lately a contemptuous review of a book by Santayana, mentioning an essay on Hamlet "dated, in every sense, 1908"—as if what has been discovered since then made any earlier appreciation of Shakespeare irrelevant and comparatively superficial. It did not occur to the reviewer that his review was "dated, in every sense, 1936." Or perhaps this thought did occur to him, and filled him with satisfaction. He was writing for the moment, not for all time; next year he will have adopted the new fashion in opinions, whatever it may be, and he no doubt hopes to remain up to date as long as he continues to write. Any other ideal for a writer would seem absurd and old-fashioned to the modern-minded man.

The desire to be contemporary is of course new only in degree; it has existed to some extent in all previous periods that believed themselves to be progressive. The Renaissance had a contempt for the Gothic centuries that had preceded it; the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries covered priceless mosaics with whitewash; the Romantic movement despised the age of the heroic couplet. Sixty-five years ago Lecky reproached my mother for being led by intellectual fashion to oppose fox-hunting: "I am sure," he wrote, "you are not really at all sentimental about foxes or at all shocked at the prettiest of all the assertions of women's rights, riding across country. But you always look upon politics and intellect as a fierce race and are so dreadfully afraid of not being sufficiently advanced or intellectual." But in none of these former times was the contempt for the past nearly as complete as it is now. From the Renaissance to the end of the eighteenth century men admired Roman antiquity; the Romantic movement revived the Middle Ages; my mother, for all her belief in nineteenth-century progress, constantly read Shakespeare and Milton. It is only since the war that it has been fashionable to ignore the past *en bloc*.

The belief that fashion alone should dominate opinion has great advantages. It makes thought unnecessary and puts the highest intelligence within the reach of everyone. It is not difficult to learn the correct use of such words as "complex," "sadism," "Oedipus," "bourgeois," "deviation," "left"; and nothing more is needed to make a brilliant writer or talker. Some, at least, of such words represented much thought on the part of their inventors; like paper money they were originally convertible into gold. But they have become for most people inconvertible, and in depreciating have increased nominal wealth in ideas. And so we are enabled to despise the paltry intellectual fortunes of former times.

The modern-minded man, although he believes profoundly in the wisdom of his period, must be presumed to be very modest about his personal powers. His highest hope is to think first what is about to be thought, to say what is about to be said, and to feel what is about to be felt; he has no wish to think better thoughts than his neighbors, to say things showing more insight, or to have emotions which are not those of some fashionable group, but only to be slightly ahead of others in point of time. Quite deliberately he suppresses what is individual in himself for the sake of the admiration of the herd. A mentally solitary life, such as that of Copernicus, or Spinoza, or Milton after the Restoration, seems pointless according to modern standards. Copernicus should have delayed his advocacy of the Copernican system until it could be made fashionable; Spinoza should have been either a good Jew or a good Christian; Milton should have moved with the times, like Cromwell's widow, who asked Charles II for a pension on the ground that she did not agree with her husband's politics. Why should an individual set himself up as an independent judge? Is it not clear that wisdom resides in the blood of the Nordic race or, alternatively, in the proletariat? And in any case what is the use of an eccentric opinion, which never can hope to conquer the great agencies of publicity?

The money rewards and widespread though ephemeral fame which those agencies have made possible places temptations in the way of able men which are difficult to resist. To be pointed out, admired, mentioned constantly in the press, and offered easy ways of earning much money is highly agreeable; and when all this is open to a man, he finds it difficult to go on doing the work that he himself thinks best and is inclined to subordinate his judgment to the general opinion.

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Various other factors contribute to this result. One of these is the rapidity of progress which has made it difficult to do work which will not soon be superseded. Newton lasted till Einstein; Einstein is already regarded by many as antiquated. Hardly any man of science, nowadays, sits down to write a great work, because he knows that, while he is writing it, others will discover new things that will make it obsolete before it appears. The emotional tone of the world changes with equal rapidity, as wars, depressions, and revolutions chase each other across the stage. And public events impinge upon private lives more forcibly than in former days. Spinoza, in spite of his heretical opinions, could continue to sell spectacles and meditate, even when his country was invaded by foreign enemies; if he had lived now, he would in all likelihood have been conscripted or put in prison. For these reasons a greater energy of personal conviction is required to lead a man to stand out against the current of his time than would have been necessary in any previous period since the Renaissance.

The change has, however, a deeper cause. In former days men wished to serve God. When Milton wanted to exercise "that one talent which is death to hide," he felt that his soul was "bent to serve therewith my Maker." Every religiously minded artist was convinced that God's aesthetic judgments coincided with his own; he had therefore a reason, independent of popular applause, for doing what he considered his best, even if his style was out of fashion. The man of science in pursuing truth, even if he came into conflict with current superstition, was still setting forth the wonders of Creation and bringing men's imperfect beliefs more nearly into harmony with God's perfect knowledge. Every serious worker, whether artist, philosopher, or astronomer, believed that in following his own convictions he was serving God's purposes. When with the progress of enlightenment this belief began to grow dim, there still remained the True, the Good, and the Beautiful. Non-human standards were still laid up in heaven, even if heaven had no topographical existence.

Throughout the nineteenth century the True, the Good, and the Beautiful preserved their precarious existence in the minds of earnest atheists. But their very earnestness was their undoing, since it made it impossible for them to stop at a halfway house. Pragmatists explained that Truth is what it pays to believe. Historians of morals reduced the Good to a matter of tribal custom. Beauty was abolished by the artists in a revolt against the sugary insipidities of a philistine epoch and in a mood of fury in which satisfaction is to be derived only from what hurts. And so the world was swept clear not only of God as a person but of God's essence as an ideal to which man owed an ideal allegiance; while the individual, as a result of a crude and uncritical interpretation of sound doctrines, was left without any inner defense against social pressure.

All movements go too far, and this is certainly true of the movement toward subjectivity, which began with Luther and Descartes as an assertion of the individual and has culminated by an inherent logic in his complete subjection. The subjectivity of truth is a hasty doctrine not validly deducible from the premises which have been thought to imply it; and the habits of centuries have made many things seem dependent upon theological belief which in fact are not so. Men lived with one kind of illusion, and when they lost it they fell into another. But it is not by old error that new error can be combated. Detachment and objectivity, both in thought and in feeling, have been historically but not logically associated with certain traditional beliefs; to preserve them without these beliefs is both possible and important. A certain degree of isolation both in space and time is essential to generate the independence required for the most important work; there must be something which is felt to be of more importance than the admiration of the contemporary crowd. We are suffering not from the decay of theological beliefs but from the loss of solitude.

BOOKS

James Harvey Robinson

THE HUMAN COMEDY. By James Harvey Robinson. With an Introduction by Harry Elmer Barnes. Harper and Brothers. $3.

IN 1898 I enrolled in James Harvey Robinson's seminar in eighteenth-century thought, which met one evening a week in the old Columbia library. The professor talked so informally and entertainingly that taking notes seemed out of place. He had wit, a dry, mordant humor, and a fund of striking, unacademic bits of information which I had not found in textbooks or formal histories; and there was a sadness in the countenance, a quality, half plaintiveness half resignation, in the voice that made even simple statements of fact amusing or illuminating, or both. "Arthur Young was an English gentleman farmer who rode around France on a horse." It sounded funny, and was illuminating: Arthur Young ceased to be a book of travels and became a live person. I recall little else, except that I wrote one paper on the Physiocrats and another on the Memoirs of Bachaumont, and acquired an abiding interest in learning why people think as they do think.

At that time Robinson was halfway through his historical tour: had traveled from classical times through the Middle Ages, stopping off at the Renaissance, to the French Revolution. He would presently say, "I know all I want to know about the French Revolution," and move on to the contemporary scene, to modern science, and from science back to pre-history, and from pre-history to the modern scene again. The long journey made him thoroughly familiar with the general history of Europe, and gave him a first-hand knowledge of the blest documentary sources. One day, in the first buildings of the New School, he picked up a dusty Latin folio, leaved through it to some amusing passage which he read with great relish, and then remarked, with a certain wistful nostalgia: "Becker, I love these old books, and I used to know them pretty well." He always knew them very well.

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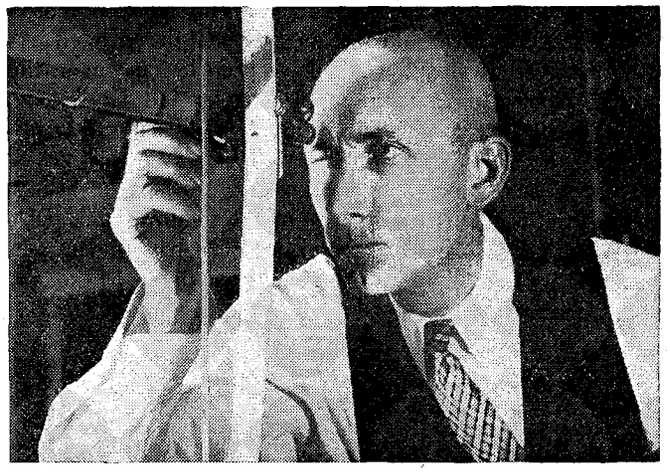
He carried his learning so lightly that few people suspected that he was an erudite scholar. When he became dissatisfied with the conventional way of writing history, impatient with the effort he and others had spent in settling Hoti's business, in determining "whether Charles the Fat was at Ingelheim or Lustnau on July 1, 887," I felt that he had earned the right to criticize the guild because he was a master-craftsman, had earned the right to say what history was good for because he knew history. I never felt that the same could be said of those many imitators who know little about history or historians except that they are subjects to be merry about *à la* Robinson.

William James once said, apropos of the famous "third manner" of his brother: "There is no third manner; poor Harry has only changed his secretaries, and the last one has included all of his hesitancies and ellipses." Many people think that Robinson had a second manner, that he went sour on history and gave it up for something else. On the contrary, he never ceased to study history, never ceased to think, and to say, that history, studied intelligently for the purpose of understanding how man has become what he is, is the most important of all subjects to know about. His quarrel with historians was that whereas they know much about what man has done they know singularly little about man himself. There are, he says, "two quite different questions" which can be asked of the past. One is, "What has happened here and there from time to time?" The other is, "How is it that we now do as we do, feel as we feel, and know what we know?" He thought historians were commonly satisfied to ask and answer the first question, whereas it is the second that is important. Historians tell us that the Edict of Nantes was revoked in 1685, and that the great majority of Frenchmen applauded that act. In itself that is not important, but if we can understand why the majority of Frenchmen applauded the persecution of the Huguenots, we can understand better why the majority of Americans applauded the persecution of German-Americans in our own day. Robinson's quarrel with historians was not that they took history seriously but that they took it without discrimination, studied it "objectively," that is to say without an object. He insisted that it should be studied "with an object." The object should be to throw some light on the nature of man and thereby enable him to understand better what he is doing and should do. His simple creed was that what is needed for salvation is chiefly enlightenment, and that the study of history should aim to make men more enlightened.

To urge historians to be as intelligent as possible and to make their learning useful to men in their present predicaments was surely not too much. But to keep on urging it for twenty-five years, even in a variety of ways and with an engaging humor—was this perhaps too much? Essentially everything that Robinson had to say on the subject was contained in "The New History" (1911) and "The Mind in the Making" (1921). The present volume is not a new work, as the title page seems to suggest, but Harry Elmer Barnes's compilation (an excellent one) from articles already published and long selections taken from previous books, notably "The Mind in the Making." Many of us would gladly exchange much repetitious comment about the "new history" for a substantial example of the new history itself. Such an example Robinson could have given us by preparing for publication the admirable lectures on the intellectual history of Europe which he gave in Columbia University, and for many years the rumor persisted that he intended to do that. I wish he could have done it.



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However, a man does what he can and must. Robinson would no doubt have said that another well-documented history, however excellent, would have been less useful in the present circumstances than popular books and articles designed to startle the conventional mind out of its torpid complacence. Perhaps he was right. At all events he was one of the ablest and most thought-provoking teachers of history in our time, and it is not for one of his admiring and grateful pupils to cavil at the performance of a man who in fact exerted a profound and beneficial influence upon the thought of his generation. CARL BECKER

The Wingless Life

THE STREET OF THE FISHING CAT. By Jolán Földes. Translated from the Hungarian by Elizabeth Jacobi. Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

THIS winner of the All-Nations Prize Novel Competition is possessed, perhaps merely by coincidence, of an international background. It is the chronicle of a Hungarian family in Paris between 1920 and the present; the international background being that capital of France which no Frenchman knows but which innumerable émigrés know too drearily well. Mr. and Mrs. Barabás and their three children, Anna, Klári, and Jani, move exclusively in the circle of exiles where a perfect if artificial democracy throws classes and nationalities together without regard for anything save the homesickness common to them all. Mr. Barabás is a furrier and his wife is a laundress; and Anna, the heroine of the family if it has one, is a dressmaker; but in the cafes where they like occasionally to sit there may be Russian bankers and Spanish noblemen and Italian intellectuals who will be glad to discuss with them the one endless subject of the future—the future meaning the time when they can fly back to their native cities and once more hop among the boughs of a remembered past. Most of them never make the flight. Their powers of locomotion are gone. "Here they are living, fugitives, their life but a wingless semblance of the life for which they had been born. Every year the construction of another empire collapses around them, and buries a few thousand or a few hundred thousand, buries them and condemns to this shadowy form of death-in-life existence." They simply continue to exist until "they slowly vanish and leave no trace."

The author of "The Street of the Fishing Cat," who herself came to Paris as a student from Hungary and stayed on at jobs somewhat resembling Anna's, has attempted to rescue the circle of exiles from their natural oblivion. She has tried to leave traces for them so that we shall know that they existed. She has dignified the Barabás family by making each member of it typical, and she has done it the honor of avoiding anything in its career that would look like melodrama. A good many things happen, and yet the general effect is one of eventlessness; there is a monotony of minor disappointments and small joys. This effect is of course intended, and from a more distinguished source could have been a fine one. Jolán Földes, however, is not a distinguished novelist. There is nothing of permanent importance about the commonplaces with which she has strewn the pathway of her people. The wisdom they acquire is not very interesting, nor do they appear to represent the timeless human family with which all great novels are concerned. The predicament of the Barabás family has only temporary meaning.

Here again it might have been possible for a first-rate novelist to make the people of the tale representative in some fashion of all ephemerids, so that the name Barabás would remain through a long future the symbol of homeless men. I am quite sure that this has not happened. The book tells me things I did not know; it is readable; and it is not as a matter of fact unintelligent. But it will be replaced in time by other documents that are truer to the passing moment. "The Street of the Fishing Cat" is a document first and last. Perhaps that made it especially eligible for a prize, since documents can be publicized more easily than works of art, and can more readily be recognized as "important." On the other hand it is likely that no such thought occurred to the judges in this case, who had after all to decide which manuscript among those submitted was best on any basis. The question could not have been whether "The Street of the Fishing Cat" was worth $19,000. Either a novel is worth the paper it is printed on or it is priceless. The question could only have been whether any other manuscript was more deserving of the prize. I should have supposed that "Steps Going Down," the American runner-up by John T. McIntyre, was more deserving. Mr. McIntyre's people are decidedly of our time, being the riffraff of post-war Philadelphia, and many of the things they say will some day be unintelligible. But at any rate they are talking to each other rather than to the reader; they seem to have no idea that they mean anything, or represent anything; and two of them, Pete and Thelma, give us the illusion that what they say was never said this way before. They are documents, but they are also persons; which the figures of Jolán Földes scarcely are. MARK VAN DOREN

An Ideal for Literature or Life

THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMANTIC IDEAL. By F. L. Lucas. The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

THERE is no use protesting; the terms romanticism and classicism will continue to be used, and here indeed is another book about them by a critic "over the water," a set of rather wandering lectures whose index, if there were one, would satisfy the most omnivorous tastes. This book has small pages and large type. But from page 223 to the top of page 225 are to be found the following names in the following order: Keats, Einstein, Michelangelo, the Pope, the Aran Islands, Dr. Johnson, Sainte-Beuve, Taine, Coleridge, Montaigne, Dryden, Johnson, Goethe, Matthew Arnold, Keats, Virginia Woolf, Desmond McCarthy, Gilbert Murray, Mackail, and Walter Pater. Page 227, not untypical, contains among others Dante, Milton, Wordsworth, Byron, the Emperor Honorius, Alaric, and Gerard de Nerval. I cannot make out whether Mr. Lucas is "classical" or "romantic." Perhaps considering his widespread allusiveness he might be defined as eclectic. The book includes a not unpleasing account of a journey to Iceland—for most critics stick, Mr. Lucas thinks, too closely to libraries—and a long attack on Coleridge and a shorter one on surrealism and Ezra Pound. It is a little difficult to find one's way intellectually through all these riches, and the author is apparently aware of the fact. For he provides "an epilogue for reviewers and others who may find the book too long." This thoughtfulness helps, in part, to clear matters up:

> In these pages it has been suggested that the fundamental quality of romanticism is not mere anti-classicism, nor medievalism, nor aspiration, nor wonder . . . but rather a liberation of the less conscious levels of the mind. Health both in life and literature lies between excess of self-

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> consciousness and excess of impulsiveness, between too much self-control and too little.
>
> . . . About our infancy, it seems, lies Caliban as well as Ariel. . . . So the romantic, I suggest, wandering in the woods of Dream has often wandered too far, and got lost like the neurotic who takes refuge from reality among the moldered lodges of his childish years. . . .

The reader is advised to hold firmly to these quotations in wandering with Mr. Lucas through his own palace of dreams, for else he might get lost in Chapter II on The Crocodiles of Alachua or The Past of Romanticism, or in Chapter III on Fairies and Fungi or The Future of Romanticism. As a matter of fact, whatever may be said in deprecation of Mr. Lucas as a historian of literature, he has a philosophy of its history. One may quarrel with his tastes, but his tastes are definite. It is a pity he lets his desire for inclusiveness obscure the lines of his thought or the qualities of his appreciations. There is one characteristic passage in which he says that just as his book was going to press he got hold of a book on surrealism, which is worked into his text as the last infantile gasp of romantic decadence.

One may, indeed one must, waive the justice of Mr. Lucas's historical use of terms and start with his use of them. There are for him two kinds of romanticism, healthy and diseased. The healthy sort is legitimate day-dreaming; it has its own vigors, which are exemplified in Malory or Homer. "Romanticism" is the dream gift of Dionysius, who brings release for the soul in chains, but for those who follow him too far heavier chains still. "Diseased romanticism specializes in 'fungi rather than fairies,' in 'ordure rather than ideals.' "

There are also two kinds of classicism, controlled spontaneity and the formality that is death. Somewhere between the two lies Mr. Lucas's ideal for literature or life, vitality master of itself, passion finding a pattern, in short that sanity whose other name is Greece; which he finds—singular juxtaposition—in the Sagas of Iceland (in which land he must have had a wonderful time), in Hardy, in eighteenth-century France, in William Morris, and in A. E. Housman. Lest the reader think I am being frivolous or inaccurate, I refer him to the last page of the Epilogue, where the author assures us that if and when the next fatuity of Europe lets loose the next deluge, it is to these he shall turn for consolation, for he knows none "nearer the truth of things." He tried them once after leaving Cambridge, in no man's land during the last war. There is, we are told, no severer critical test.

Mr. Lucas's book is an interesting symptom of the atmosphere in which discussions of classicism and romanticism are repeatedly carried on. The issue is seldom treated in purely aesthetic or in purely logical terms; it is indeed part of Mr. Lucas's contention that any thorough consideration of poetry must involve a consideration of life, and the good life. It is not so many years ago that Irving Babbitt was calling the literary world to order and chasing Rousseau out from under his bed. The *élan vital* was to be mastered by the inner check. Mr. Lucas is a good deal more genial and catholic, though like so many writers bred on Greece he displays occasionally a woeful lack of that serenity and "sense of the fitting" which all lovers of the classics agree has gone out of the contemporary world. He grows petulant because Coleridge didn't know more Greek or French. It may not be beside the point to argue that he himself might have known a little more about Plato and about German metaphysics, or even Coleridge, before dismissing so categorically Coleridge's theory of the imagination. It is never quite clear whether Mr. Lucas is berating Coleridge or I. A. Richards's book about Coleridge.

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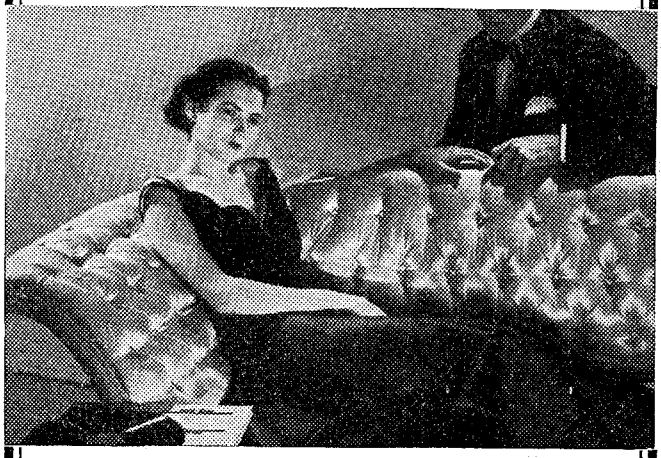

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He condescends, of all things, to Dryden, who is most of the time a "great journalist," much of the time "a greater orator," "occasionally a great poet." Shelley comes out rather a fool alongside of Hardy. He is kind enough to say, "nor need writers like Swift or Baudelaire be denied greatness because there was so much about them neither sane nor sound."

There is something rotten in the state of life, of politics, and of literature Mr. Lucas feels. He looks to the science of psychology and to the poets to save us. But good poetry, he tells us, is that of a good poet. With Longinus he holds that "great poetry is the echo of a great soul." And now we are at last ready to begin. What is greatness; what is goodness? Mr. Lucas found them in Iceland, a journey which he recommends to the reader. But the secret he has kept to himself, and also the secret of classicism and romanticism. The discussion cannot be considered closed or, as broached in this book, very clear. There are lots of romantic insights in the book; a little "classical" order might have rendered them more coherent.

IRWIN EDMAN

A Baedeker of Jew-Baiting

SOME OF MY BEST FRIENDS ARE JEWS. By Robert Gessner. Farrar and Rinehart. $3.

THIS book will be widely and loudly damned. Not because it brilliantly restates the Marxist thesis that anti-Semitism is an economic phenomenon, or the corollary that it can be ended only through basic social surgery. That might have been overlooked as an academic indiscretion. What the nihilists—Jewish and Gentile—will not forgive is the author's audacity in planning to eliminate what they are content to deplore. Organized resistance by Jews to fascism, open alliance of Jews with other minority groups, active Jewish participation in creating a Socialist state—these are his specifics.

There will be—there have already been—polite apologies for Mr. Gessner's *impolitesse*, nationalist gnashing of teeth over his "international" point of view. Fortunately these will not cancel the book. For the author has so thoroughly marshaled his evidence, documented his facts so fully, and presented his case so cogently as to make powerful appeal to the reason and courage of American Jewry. He is in a sense its paradigm. Like most of its younger generation he has been more kicked than catechized into Jewish consciousness. Like theirs, his Jewishness is primarily a reaction and a defense rather than a positive. Unlike them, however, he has looked closely into himself, his relationship with his fellow-Jews, and the Jewish status throughout the world.

Geographically his inquiry began on a Michigan Main Street and ended at the Crimean steppes. It carried Mr. Gessner from the assimilated Jewries of England and France, through the new Ghetto of Germany and the unspeakable Polish pale, to the renascent nationalism of Palestine. It taught him that Jew-baiting survives wherever it is lucrative; that—whether in Detroit or Nürnberg or Tel Aviv—the fires of race hatred are alternately stoked and banked for profit; that where—as in the Soviet Union—a socialized society is in the making, prejudice ceases to pay and atrophies.

Especially provocative are the chapters which deal with Zionism. Despite Mr. Gessner's laudatory recognition of the achievements of the Jewish pioneers in rebuilding a desolate land, they will provoke denunciation from ultra-nationalists. Yet the author has not been unsympathetic in his treatment

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of the conflicts inherent in the Labor-Zionist attempt to reconcile socialism and nationalism in a capitalist economy. Moreover, his emphasis on the recurrent problem of Arab-Jewish relationship and his insistence on the necessity of bringing about a rapprochement in terms of absolute equality between the two peoples should provoke a careful review of the entire question.

Mr. Gessner deals finally with the dynamics of the situation he decries. He makes clear that Jewish unity is a fictitious concept so long as Honorary Aryanism is conferred on Jewish bankers in Germany and wealthy American Jews contribute to organizations whose program reeks of anti-Semitism. He insists that the concept of such "unity" be replaced by that of union between the Jewish and non-Jewish masses in resisting their common fascist foes. And, in this reviewer's judgment. his book constitutes a significant advance toward that end.

JAMES WATERMAN WISE

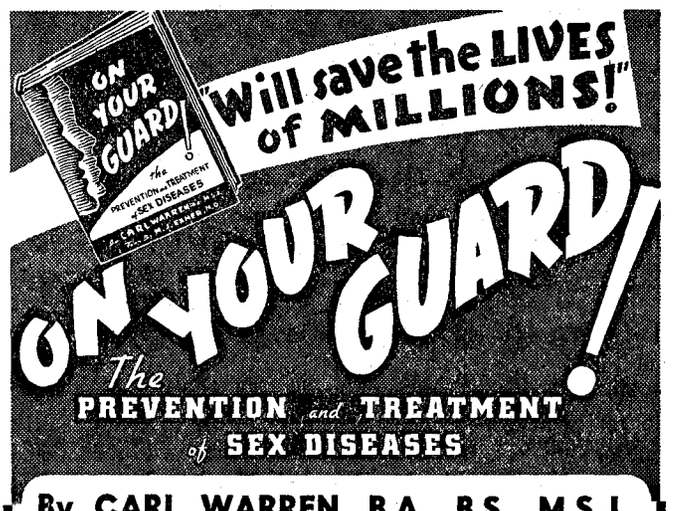
DRAMA

More Matter and Less Art

MAXWELL ANDERSON continues to exhibit a talent that is rich and varied and copious. For sheer romantic dash there is, indeed, no one else writing for our theater who can even approach him, and there are occasions when he seems to have, besides, nearly everything a first-rate dramatist needs. The fact remains, nevertheless, that he reaches this best less frequently than he seems about to reach it and that he can slip from the powerful into the pretentious or from the beautiful into the showy without seeming to realize himself what a falling off is there. Thus "The Wingless Victory," which Katharine Cornell is acting at the Empire, is both astonishingly good and astonishingly bad since it begins with a first act remarkable for vividness and crispness and color only to end with a third so pretentiously empty and conventional as to seem hardly a part of the same play.

Most critics of the piece have commented more or less severely on the staleness of the subject. The story of an adventurous sea captain who brings home an exotic princess to hidebound Salem suggests Mr. Hergesheimer's "Java Head," as well as, more generally, the whole Madame Butterfly tradition, and it seems as though Mr. Anderson, becoming progressively more aware of the conventionality of the theme, found it more and more difficult to avoid the clichés it calls to mind. He begins, as I have already remarked, with genuine brilliance. The family to which the captain is returning is vividly presented, and the dialogue is, for a while, not only as fine as any Mr. Anderson has written but a triumphant example of a style he himself has invented—elevated almost to poetry, but sufficiently flexible and free to be accepted very much as normal speech. Yet from the moment the central character enters, the play starts its downward course and grows less interesting as well as less convincing from moment to moment.

The fault is certainly not Miss Cornell's. She makes a striking figure and comes as near, I believe, as anyone could to vitalizing the character; but there is another defect in the piece perhaps more important, even, than the familiarity of the theme: the fact, namely, that the princess herself is the one completely unconvincing person in the play. I say "unconvincing" rather than "unreal" because I have no idea what



By CARL WARREN, B.A., B.S., M.S.J.
Foreword by M. J. EXNER, M.D.
Consulting Physician to the American Social Hygiene Assn.

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ARE YOU THE ONE IN SEVEN? Men First, but also Women—Youth, the Dangerous Age — Regarding Rags and Riches—The Professional Prostitute—The Amateur Promiscuous Girl — Prevalence among Races—Venereal Diseases and Crime.
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such a woman would be like. But I do know that the figure Mr. Anderson has created—she seems a vague blend of the genuinely primitive with some sort of ideal humanity—is never any more than an abstraction modeled in wax. She might have been kept in the background. She might have been made merely the occasion of the conflicts, which might have remained, as they seemed in the beginning to be, the real subject of the play. But Mr. Anderson has chosen instead to make her tragedy the central subject without succeeding in his attempt to give her enough life or enough character of her own to engage our emotions. The result is that the whole last act dealing with her laments and her suicide seems merely pretentious and dull.

Of all Mr. Anderson's recent plays only "Winterset" seems to me to have been original enough really to challenge the author's powers. It is not, I hope, necessary to explain that I do not single this play out because its theme happens to have sociological significance. I single it out because what Mr. Anderson had to say there was as original as his manner of saying it. In "The Wingless Victory" not only the plot but the theme as well—Puritan pride and Christian inhumanity—is familiar, and at best the author merely restates it with force rather than with originality. Perhaps he is to some extent a victim of his own talent, too gifted with the powers of expression to question his subjects as carefully as he should. Like several previous plays "The Wingless Victory" seems even at its best too much like a brilliantly executed exercise. Mr. Anderson needs no more practice. He has learned his craft. Is it too much to ask that he should employ it again as usefully as he did in "Winterset"?

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

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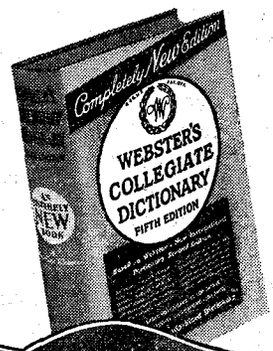

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RECORDS

THERE is nothing for you to do but to get refunds on your Christmas presents and buy the records of Mozart's "Marriage of Figaro" that were made originally for subscribers in England and are now released here by Victor (three albums with excellent accompanying booklets, $33). These records acquire additional importance from the fact that they record a performance by the company of the Glyndebourne Mozart Opera Festival, where Mozart is given in a way that demonstrates the perfection that is to be achieved in operatic performance with imperfect elements. For the singers vary in quality, as even singers chosen for a festival are bound to do; but they fit themselves completely into an ensemble and its single style—the perfect style for Mozart of Fritz Busch, who conducts.

The orchestra is not recorded as well as we know it can be; but the deficiency is slight, and nothing is obscured. On the contrary, it is a peculiarity of records to present music to the ear in more sharply defined detail than living performance does, and these records of "Figaro" have made me aware of details which enable me to understand the contention that Mozart's finest music is in his operas, and that they contain the finest dramatic music ever written. The reason is not only the miracles of expressiveness, of characterization, of wit, in themselves, but their subtlety, the economy with which they are produced. To those who require the luxuriance of Wagner and Strauss, Mozart is simple prattle; but "Figaro" is superior to "Meistersinger" and "Rosenkavalier" precisely because of a quality analogous to what mathematicians call elegance.

Victor also has issued a volume of Debussy's songs: "Fêtes Galantes," "Le Promenoir des deux Amants," "Trois Chansons de Bilitis," the "Ballade des Femmes de Paris," and "De Grève" from "Proses Lyriques" (seven records, $10.50). They are sung by Maggie Teyte, an authoritative interpreter of Debussy, with fine accompaniments by Alfred Cortot; and there is an excellent booklet containing the texts in French and English and short introductions by the artists and Emile Vuillermoz. In other words, a very careful job has been done for any who are interested in these examples of a formula applied without much regard for the meanings of the texts, or even for their rhythms and accents, which we are told are the basis of the attenuated declamation that I find very tiresome.

Almost as tiresome is the succession of pretty effects in Columbia's volume of songs by Erich Wolff (five records, $5); and Ernst Wolff's singing adds to the monotony by being all in one color. On a Columbia single ($1) are two fine Händel items, beautifully sung: "Silent Worship" from "Ptolemy," sung by Dennis Noble, and "O Ruddier Than the Cherry" from "Acis and Galatea," sung by Malcolm McEachern. On a Victor single ($1.50) are two ancient liturgical melodies in orchestral arrangements by Stokowski which go beyond anything Stokowski has done thus far in artistic defacement.

Having neglected jazz recently, I will mention that one of the finest jazz records ever made, "Blues of Israel," available only on English Parlophone, is to be had at the Commodore Music Shop, 144 East Forty-second Street, New York, where you will find other good things in that field that cannot be obtained elsewhere.

B. H. HAGGIN

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Letters to the Editors

Censorship, Chicago Style

Dear Sirs: In reply to the prayer of D. J. Rolfs for a decent newspaper in Chicago, printed in your letter columns some weeks ago, I wish to point out three facts, probably known to newspaper publishers but not to readers in general.

First, there is a city ordinance in Chicago limiting the size of newsstands. The purpose of this ordinance is to keep newspapers that are not wanted off the stands. It does not interfere with the sale of foreign-language papers or racing-information sheets, but the moment an attempt was made to put a new paper on the stands the law would be enforced. The ordinance also limits the sale of papers at a newsstand to those published in Chicago.

Second, the newsboys of Chicago are organized into an association. The association is controlled by the newspapers, and its members would therefore refuse to handle an additional newspaper although it would mean more revenue to the newsboys themselves. This would seriously restrict the distribution of a new paper.

Third, a new paper would have to cope with gang warfare and terrorism if it would establish itself. Gangsters were imported into Chicago for the first time in the circulation wars of the *Tribune* and *Herald and Examiner,* and there is no warrant for the belief that the morals of newspaper owners have undergone a change for the better since that day.

Is it any wonder that Chicago journalism is what it is? F. L.

Chicago, December 20

The "Sitdown" and the I.W.W.

Dear Sirs: Louis Adamic, in writing of the sitdown, refers to the I. W. W. in a manner which I resent. "It probably is a sort of development," he says, "of the I. W. W. 'folded-arm strike' and of 'striking on the job'; only it is better, *manlier* than the latter, which required men to pretend they were working, and to accomplish as little as possible without being discharged, which was more fatiguing than to work according to one's capacity, as well as contrary to the natural inclinations of the *best* class of workers [italics mine]."

The I. W. W. during the war years and those that followed the war (I have no direct knowledge of the after years, having been "retired from circulation") were not restricted as to the method to gain their ends. The "sitdown strike" would have accomplished nothing in the areas in which the I. W. W. were particularly active during the war, such as the logging industry, where if you had "sat down" the bosses would have let you sit and starve; or a large construction outfit such as Stone and Webster, where the work was often several miles from camp; or railroad work, where the same conditions applied. As for manliness, I maintain that one had to be very much of a man to belong to the I.W.W. What does Adamic mean by the *best* class of workers? Doesn't he know that the roughnecks in the woods, in the iron mines, in the coal mines are absolutely essential, or the "sitters" would have nothing to "sit" at?

Incidentally I think it was the roughnecks that led the way in the matter when a number of transients, of which I had the honor to be one, took possession of the committee room of the FERA office here at Madison in March, 1935, in order to enforce their demands, and also ordered a steak dinner and charged it to the officials of the FERA. We "sat and sang" until the officials consented to see us. It ill becomes the writer of "Dynamite" to cast aspersions on those who afforded him so much material for that book.

JOHN ANDERSON

Madison, Wis., December 18

The Soviet Constitution

Dear Sirs: Few things are more amazing in this amazing time of ours than the misinterpretation of the new constitution of the Soviet Union in a large part of the English-speaking world—particularly in its liberal part.

When one discusses the matter with honest and sincere Communists, everything is clear and intelligible from the beginning. Of course they are proud of the achievements of the nineteen years of the Bolshevist Revolution, and they regard the new constitution as a proof of these achievements. Of course they will talk to you for hours about "Soviet democracy," which they maintain to be "a million times more democratic than any bourgeois democracy"; for this is their honest and sincere belief, learned from Lenin himself, though as a matter of fact it does not become less doubtful by his high authority. But of course they only laugh, and very heartily, at the idea that this "Soviet democracy" even in the new constitution diminishes in any way the cleavage between the Soviet Union and the Western world, or that the dictatorship of the proletariat, which in reality is the dictatorship of their party, will be weakened to any extent by this new constitution. Of course this dictatorship will last under the new constitution just as it has lasted under the old ones. There is no doubt whatever about that. This fact is expressed with all possible clearness in the document itself. It is only some liberal, social-democratic interpreters who attempt to deny it.

A mention of the two points most frequently misinterpreted will suffice here to make this evident:

1. The new constitution (Article 134) enlarges the electoral rights, grants universal, equal, and direct suffrage by secret ballot. Isn't this the true realization of the old, venerated democratic ideal? It is not! For while the suffrage is given to the citizens—just as it has remained unchanged, on paper, in the Italian and German dictatorships—the right to nominate candidates is (Article 141) reserved to the Communist Party or to organizations under its control. It is not necessary to quote all the other passages of the new constitution which also secure the predominance of the dictatorial party. This one device of controlling the nomination of the candidates for the universal, equal, direct, and secret franchise is sufficient. It is exactly the device used by the fascist dictatorships in Italy (see the law of 1928) and in Germany. It makes a mockery of the democratic franchise.

2. Sidney Webb, in *The Nation* of November 21, quoted, as other liberals are always doing, Article 125, which —without the unfortunately usual omissions—reads as follows: "In conformity with the interests of the toilers, and in order to strengthen the socialist system, the citizens of the U. S. S. R. are guaran-

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teed freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly and of holding mass-meetings, freedom of street processions and demonstrations. These rights of the citizens are insured by placing at the disposal of the toilers and their organizations printing presses, supplies of paper, public buildings, the streets, means of communication, and other material requisites for the exercise of these rights." And to this Mr. Webb adds, "Truly a unique and unprecedented conception of public freedom."

Truly, it is neither unique nor unprecedented—nor is it freedom. For exactly the same provisions, only more lengthily worded, are already to be found in the first Russian constitution of July 10, 1918, in Lenin's famous "Declaration of the rights of the toiling and exploited peoples" (Section 1, Article 2, No. 14 and 15). There is nothing new in the new constitution in this respect. And therefore there will be after the acceptance of the new constitution no greater freedom of speech, of the press, and of assembly than there has been until now. That is to say, there will be no freedom at all except under the strict control of the dictatorial party and its dictatorial rulers.

I could easily quote a dozen or more similar frequent misinterpretations—all of them to be disproved in exactly the same way by simply referring to the uncontested documents and to the uncontested facts that ought to be known to everyone who speaks publicly about these matters. No honest and sincere Communist will disagree. But the amazing question remains: Why are liberal writers, more than others, so anxious to prove that the Bolshevists are what they neither want nor claim to be, namely, democrats in the old Western sense of the word?

ARTHUR FEILER

New York, December 20

Age of Innocence

Dear Sirs: Mr. Edman's poem on the perverted use of such innocent word as left and right, red and white, and his sigh for the past impels me to a friendly indorsement:

I sigh for the days when many a word
Was linked to all we had always heard,
When "fairy" spelt charm and "pansy" a plant
And "Fanny" was only the name of your aunt.

HELEN SALZ

San Francisco, December 16

CONTRIBUTORS

LOUIS FISCHER, whose mysterious silence for three weeks caused his many readers in this country considerable anxiety, is still on the job and very much alive, as his article indicates. At present he is on a brief visit to Geneva, but expects shortly to return to Spain.

LAWRENCE WESTBROOK, formerly assistant administrator of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, is now chairman of the Advisory Board of the WPA.

M. E. RAVAGE, *The Nation's* Paris correspondent, has lived abroad, principally in France, for the past eight years. His articles on European politics and on current events in the French capital have made him familiar to readers of *The Nation* and other periodicals.

ROSCOE FLEMING, a reporter for the Denver *Rocky Mountain News,* recently went to Lincoln to make a first-hand study of Nebraska politics and of the problems involved in setting up this country's first unicameral, non-partisan legislature.

BERTRAND RUSSELL defies labeling and is so well known he hardly needs it. An Englishman, a philosopher, a mathematician, a physicist, he has written books on many diverse subjects, including marriage, relativity, China, the conquest of happiness, and American history.

CARL BECKER, professor of history at Cornell University and former president of the American Historical Association, is the distinguished author of many works on American and European history, among them "The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth-Century Philosophers," "The Declaration of Independence," and "Progress and Power."

JAMES WATERMAN WISE, formerly editor of *Opinion,* is the author of "Nazism: An Assault on Civilization." He has just returned from Brazil, which he visited as a delegate of the Joint Committee for the Defense of the Brazilian People.

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